Metapoetry in Euripides

Isabelle Torrance

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ISABELLE TORRANCE

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Carissimis Parentibus
A. Andrew Torrance
et
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Preface

The ideas in this book have been evolving since I submitted my Ph.D. thesis on Euripides' *Iphigenia among the Taurians* at Trinity College Dublin in 2004. Although this book bears no obvious relation to my doctoral thesis, the *Iphigenia among the Taurians* features prominently throughout in discussions of intertexuality, *ekphrasis*, self-conscious fiction, and the elusive Euripidean 'tone'. I bear a debt of gratitude especially to my doctoral supervisor Judith Mossman, but also to my examiners John Dillon and Pat Easterling, for much encouragement at an early formative stage.

This book was essentially written during two periods of leave. The University of Notre Dame granted me one semester of supported leave (in 2009–10), and allowed me to take a further semester of leave in 2011 to complete the project. Notre Dame's Institute for Scholarship in the Liberal Arts provided travel expenses to enable the presentation of parts of my work at the University of Nottingham (in 2007) and at the Classical Association conference in Glasgow (in 2009), covered the costs of commissioning the illustrations and of the indexing, awarded me two summer stipends in 2009 and in 2011 to pursue this project, and funded two visits (in February and March 2010) by Edith Hall, with whom I discussed my work and whose advice helped me to focus. I also received a summer stipend in 2010 under the Notre Dame faculty scholarship award scheme, and a travel and research award from the Nanovic Institute for European Studies, which covered expenses during my time as a Visiting Research Fellow at the University of Exeter in autumn 2009. It is a great pleasure to acknowledge the support of Notre Dame as an institution, and of my Notre Dame colleagues in Classics, especially the late Sabine MacCormack, who was as generous as she was inspiring, and my chair Liz Mazurek, who read a draft of Chapter 4 and made several helpful suggestions.

Several other colleagues have helped me see this project through to its fruition. In Exeter my dear friend Karen Ní Mheallaigh was a most gracious host, and has been a beacon in bad times and in good, always ready to read a draft or discuss anything 'meta'. I also benefited greatly from conversations with Matthew Wright in Exeter, and from his (no longer anonymous) comments for OUP on the first three

chapters of this book. James Morwood, similarly, made many perspicacious remarks on the same chapters in his capacity as (now unmasked) OUP reader. I am grateful also to Niall Slater for feedback on a draft of Chapter 2, and for much general encouragement. Overall, however, special mention must be given to Alan Sommerstein, who has read each of the five chapters in this book in some form or another, always with astonishing speed and insight. His detailed comments have saved me from more than a few infelicities and errors and have led to many improvements. Parts of Chapter 1 are revised from an article which first appeared in the *American Journal of Philology* 132.2 (2011) 177-204 (Copyright © 2011 The Johns Hopkins University Press), reprinted with permission by The Johns Hopkins University Press. Chapter 3 is a newly updated version of an article published in the *Cambridge Classical Journal* (2010) 213–58, here reprinted in revised form with the kind permission of the Cambridge Philological Society. Hilary O'Shea, Taryn Campbell, Heather Watson, Cathryn Steele, Kizzy Taylor-Richelieu, and the entire team at OUP have been a pleasure to work with, and extremely efficient. Needless to say, any remaining inadequacies are due to my own shortcomings or obstinacy.

Above all else, the support of my family has meant the most. My husband Aaron Ryan has brought me more happiness than I could say I deserve in the years of researching and writing this book. My brother-in-law, Michael Ryan, brought his illustrations to life for the cover of the book, and I have deeply appreciated Michael's expert support, and the moral support of all my Tipperary in-laws, John Paul, Tammy, Pa Joe, and especially Helen, whose kindness and wisdom defy every mother-in-law stereotype. My own brothers Marc and Alexis Torrance have always been available to lend an ear or to give emergency technical support, delivered with good humour. The last word goes to my parents, Andrew and Marie-Christiane Torrance, who have been there since the beginning. I dedicate this book to them, a small token of thanks for everything they have given me.

Isabelle Torrance

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Abbreviations

Abbreviations listed here are restricted to those which do not appear (or are referred to differently) in *LSJ* (Liddel–Scott-Jones, *Greek–English Lexicon* (Oxford, 1996)) or in the *OCD* (*Oxford Classical Dictionary* (Oxford, 2003)). In some cases, abbreviations of ancient authors' names and text titles are less truncated than in the aforementioned works and the authors and works referred to should be obvious. Overall, English titles of texts are preferred to transliterated Greek titles (or Latin titles), so that I refer to *Libation Bearers* (*LB*), for example, rather than *Choephoroi*, though in the case of fragmentary texts, where titles are not proper names, both English and Greek titles are given, at least in the first instance and in the Index. Unless otherwise stated, all fragment numbers for Greek tragedy are those listed in *Tragicorum Graecorum Fragmenta* (*TGrF*), and fragment numbers for Greek comedy are taken from *Poetae Comici Graeci* (*PCG*).

Act. Class.	*Acta Classica*
BMCR	*Bryn Mawr Classical Review*
CA	*Classical Antiquity*
CCJ	*Cambridge Classical Journal*
CP	*Classical Philology*
CSCA	*California Studies in Classical Antiquity*
CW	*Classical World*
HSCP	*Harvard Studies in Classical Philology*
LICS	*Leeds International Classical Studies*
PEG	*Poetae Epici Graeci*
QUCC	*Quaderni Urbinati di Cultura Classica*
REG	*Revue des Études Grecques*
RhM	*Rheinisches Museum für Philologie*
WS	*Wiener Studien*
YCS	*Yale Classical Studies*

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Introduction

> With due respect to Socrates, poets are generally very well aware of what they are doing: aware not only of their craft in general, of the function of poetry, of the relationship between poet and audience and so on, but also of the individual way in which they operate, and of the impact they want to have.
>
> J. M. Bremer (1993) 125

This book revisits some old chestnuts of Euripidean scholarship and proposes a new framework for understanding his oeuvre as a whole. It has always been clear, from the fifth century BC onwards, that Euripides is different from the other great fifth-century tragic poets, his predecessor Aeschylus and his older contemporary Sophocles. Euripides was mercilessly parodied by his younger contemporary, the comic poet Aristophanes, in a way the other two dramatists are not. Why is Euripides such a significant source of comic material? What is so different about him? Scholars have offered various answers: he is controversial, radical, a rationalist who subverted (even abased) the genre of tragedy.[1] This book suggests a different answer. I argue that Euripidean distinctiveness is entirely linked to the highly developed metapoetic strategies of his dramas. These strategies are, in some cases, the focus of Aristophanic parodies of Euripidean style, such as the characterization of Euripidean drama as 'novel' (*kainos*). Such techniques may also be common across the genres of tragedy, satyr-drama, and comedy, appearing only implicitly in tragedy, which cannot withstand explicit self-referentiality in the same manner as can satyr-drama and comedy. Several scholars,

[1] Michelini (1987) 3–51 and Mossman (2003) 1–15 provide excellent surveys of attitudes to Euripides.

most notably Froma Zeitlin and the late Charles Segal, have observed metapoetic elements in specific Euripidean tragedies,[2] but there exists no detailed study of this aspect of Euripidean drama, nor has the connection between Euripidean metapoetics and Euripidean distinctiveness been studied in sufficient depth. This book aims to go some way towards filling that gap.

Zeitlin's concept of a palimpsestic text in her brilliant analysis of Euripides' *Orestes* and Segal's exposition of metatragedy in the *Bacchae* have both had a formative influence on my ideas. Zeitlin's notion of a palimpsest anticipated (by two years) Gérard Genette's influential *Palimpsests*, a narratological study of the relationship between literary texts in which he developed five categories of 'transtextuality' and coined the terminology of the *hypotext* which lurks beneath the surface of the *hypertext*.[3] An emphasis on authorial intention is also central to Genette's theory. In this sense, Genette's theory differs from the linguistic theories of Saussure, who influenced poststructuralist theorists Kristeva and Bakhtin (discussed below). For Saussure, *langue* (rendered 'system' in English) is more important than *parole* ('work'), so signification and function are privileged at the expense of intention.[4] Segal's approach in discussing the *Bacchae* had more to do with recognizing the artifice of the tragic theatre than with palimpsestic layers of textual allusion, as did Helene Foley's analysis of the mask of Dionysus.[5] This focus on metatheatre in the *Bacchae* has been followed by Dobrov.[6] With the god of theatre as a leading character in the drama, and Pentheus' transvestism, Euripides' *Bacchae* is a prime case study for metatheatricality, while the loss of Aeschylus' *Edonians* and *Bassarids*, on which *Bacchae* was most likely modelled in several ways, means that it is difficult to recover the palimpsestic nature of that text.

Thomas Rosenmeyer has recently challenged and criticized the 'overload' of identifications of metatheatre in Greek drama and beyond, where an all-pervasive presence of metatheatricality seems to become the overriding factor in a dramatic experience.[7] I share some of Rosenmeyer's concerns in this area (see Ch. 5, pp. 269–71), and agree with his assessment that metatheatrical or metafictional references

[2] Zeitlin (2003*a*) [1980] on *Orestes*, C. Segal (1982) 215–71 on *Bacchae*.
[3] Genette (1997) [1982].
[4] Saussure (1983) [1916].
[5] Foley (2003*a*) [1980].
[6] Dobrov (2001) 70–85.
[7] T. Rosenmeyer (2002).

represent select moments during a performance rather than an overarching framework.[8] Nevertheless, the terminology of metatheatricality and metafiction remains useful for describing dramatic moments or scenes that trigger audience reflection on the theatricality of a production or the fictionality of a plot. Similarly valuable is Matthew Wright's concept of 'metamythology', which he uses to analyse the way Euripidean characters display a self-conscious awareness of their own mythological stories.[9]

The approaches of these scholars are all appealing in their own ways and eminently suited to the specific plays they discuss. For the purposes of this book, however, 'metapoetry' suggested itself as an appropriate umbrella term for the multifarious kinds of self-referentiality present in Euripides' oeuvre as a whole. The concept of metapoetry, as applied within these pages, encompasses all instances of poetic self-reflexivity, where the drama invites a recognition of the fact that it is a poetic construct, whether theatrical, fictional, textual, or intertextual. In each case, metapoetic techniques are analysed in conjunction with thematic concerns (social, theological, or political), so that metapoetry *can* usefully be used as a broad framework for understanding Euripidean drama. The chapters are organized thematically, each focusing on different aspects of metapoetry, but intertextuality is an important common thread throughout the book. Since Euripidean drama is like virtually all Greek tragedy and satyr-play in dramatizing events from Greek mythology, much of it could be said to be 'intertextual' in the loosest possible sense. Common plot motifs have been an important focus of studies in Euripides' use of Aeschylus and Homer by Rachel Aélion and Klaus Lange, respectively.[10] For precise verbal echoes scholars of Greek tragedy have seemed to prefer the term 'allusion' to 'intertextuality', in contrast to their counterparts in the field of Roman literature.[11] This clearly stems from the emphasis on the oral and performative nature of Greek poetry in scholarship of the last

[8] T. Rosenmeyer (2002) 107.

[9] Wright (2005) 133–57 on *Iphigenia among the Taurians* and *Helen* and Wright (2006*a*) 31–42 on *Cyclops*. Lamari (2010) 32–3 with n. 159 appeals to Wright's concept in her analysis of Jocasta's choice of language in the prologue of *Phoenician Women*.

[10] Aélion (1983), who uses the framework of 'inheritance', Lange (2002).

[11] e.g. Stinton (1986), Garner (1990), Halleran (1997). On intertextuality in Roman literature see especially Hinds (1998) and Edmunds (2001), with further references.

decades,[12] so that the notion of 'text' inherent in the origin of the term 'intertextuality' has been avoided. Nevertheless, more scholars of tragedy are now using the framework of intertextuality,[13] perhaps encouraged by Pietro Pucci's pioneering application of the term to the study of Homeric epic.[14] Still the question remains of what exactly is meant by the concept.

Like 'metatheatricality', the term 'intertextuality' has suffered from overuse and is now applied to a variety of contexts other than the one in which it was first coined by Julia Kristeva.[15] As a poststructuralist critic, 'intertextuality' for Kristeva described the unstable meaning of texts and the lack of authorial control over their meaning.[16] Kristeva sought to combine the theories of Saussure with those of Bakhtin, for whom Saussure's theories fell short in being too abstract and in not taking more account of social context.[17] Like Bakhtin, Kristeva stresses the importance of the cultural contexts in which literature is produced. For Kristeva, ideas in literature 'are not presented as finished, consumable products, but . . . encourage readers themselves to step into the production of meaning'.[18] Readers of Kristeva seem to have done precisely this by appropriating her term 'intertextuality' and associating it with the sort of literary influence of one writer on another which was not at all part of Kristeva's original formulation.[19] This led Kristeva to abandon the term 'intertextuality' in favour of 'transposition'.[20] She has recently reflected on the popularity of intertextuality as a concept, on how it has often been understood in

[12] Edmunds (1995) 4, D. Fowler (1997) 28–9.

[13] Gregory (2006) discusses the intertextual relationship between Euripides' *Alcestis* and Sophocles' *Antigone*, and had already used the framework of intertextuality in Gregory (1995) to discuss *Hecuba* and Homer. Intertextuality is a central issue for Lamari (2010) in her analysis of Euripides' *Phoenician Women*.

[14] Pucci (1987) and (1999) 210–11, followed by Tsagalis (2008). Lamari (2010) 120 with n. 464 refers to Pucci.

[15] Edmunds (1995) discusses some of the various applications of 'intertextuality' in the context of classical literature.

[16] Kristeva (1980) [1969] 36–63.

[17] For the Bakhtinian approach, see e.g. Bakhtin (1973) [1929] 167, Medvedev/Bakhtin (1978) [1928] 119–22, Vološinov (1986) [1929] 95. On the vexed question of how much involvement Bakhtin had in the work of either Medvedev or Vološinov, see the translators' discussions in Medvedev/Bakhtin (1978) ix–xxiii and Vološinov (1986) vii–xii.

[18] Allen (2000) 34.

[19] In his Introduction to Kristeva (1980), Leon Roudiez stresses (15) that the term, as Kristeva conceived it, 'has been generally misunderstood'.

[20] Kristeva (1984) 59–60.

structuralist terms 'as an appeal to citations' and on the fact that, for her, 'it has always been about introducing history into structuralism'.[21] Kristeva's critics argue that her densely theoretical focus means that she loses sight of the way literary texts and different literary genres actually work in relation to a literary canon.[22] Thomas Schmitz comments that Kristeva 'makes fundamental statements in the field of philosophical linguistics or psychology rather than providing tools for the analysis of literary texts'.[23]

Where does all this leave us for understanding Euripides? Scholars of Greek tragedy, certainly Zeitlin and Segal, have tended to be structuralist in their approaches, and structuralist narratology stresses that we must identify how a narrative resembles others in order to determine what is unique in that narrative.[24] At the same time, Zeitlin, Segal, and others, have been careful to pay close attention to social and cultural contexts in a way that Genette, for example, does not. Mastronarde's recent study of Euripides places Euripidean drama firmly within its social context while also stressing the open-endedness of his plays.[25] Although I use the term intertextuality in the largely structuralist sense that it has popularly acquired, connected with authorial intention to a certain extent, it has been important also to consider cultural context and audience participation in the production of meaning. Moreover, I have aimed to be specific in analysing intertextuality by focusing on examples of clear engagement with a specific source supported by evidence of significant allusion, use of rare words, names, or metaphors (and in some cases (near-)verbatim quotations), or visual performance echoes, following the appropriation of the concept of intertextuality by scholars in the performance and visual arts.[26] There is a riddling element to intertextuality in Euripides which calls to mind Lowell Edmunds' appeal to the aesthetic of poetry in his treatment of intertextuality in Roman literature as 'pleasing or intriguing, often

[21] In Oliver (2002) 446.
[22] e.g. Frow (1986) 127–9.
[23] Schmitz (2007) 78.
[24] Schmitz (2007) 43–62, esp. 46.
[25] Mastronarde (2010).
[26] See e.g. Hatten (1985), Allsen (1994), Korsyn (1999) and Klein (2005) on intertextuality in music studies, W. Steiner (1985) on intertextuality in painting, and Kline (1992), Cancalon and Spacagna (1994), Carlson (1994), Dunne (2001), Bulman (2007), Redmond (2009) on intertextuality in film and theatre studies.

unordinary, uses of language that convey or portend some meaning valuable to the reader'.[27] This study has not sought to further develop or suggest new theoretical models but has rather focused on analysing the specific relationship between Euripides and his literary sources within existing theoretical parameters. Homer, Aeschylus, and Sophocles are the major poets discussed as sources for Euripides, and it has been important to include discussion of fragmentary plays in order to present the fullest possible analysis. An overall pattern emerges where Euripides largely continues epic paradigms, transposing them into new contexts, and appealing to epic authority. His relationship with the other tragedians, however, is one of more direct rivalry as he seeks to create new versions of old stories within the tragic genre. I am aware that there remains much more to be said on the subject of lyric poetry, especially, as a source of inspiration for Euripides. The *Helen*, for example, demonstrates both a continuity with, and an innovative response to, what we know of Stesichorus' *Palinode*.[28] Richard Garner's work contains many interesting suggestions of allusions to lyric poetry in tragedy,[29] and Laura Swift has recently done much to illuminate the influence of non-tragic lyric on the lyric passages of tragedy.[30] I regret that there has been no space here to accommodate further discussion on the topic.

Our study begins in Chapter 1 with Euripides' *Electra*, the most notorious of Euripides' responses to Aeschylus' *Oresteia*, and continues to discuss *Iphigenia among the Taurians* and *Orestes* also in relation to the *Oresteia*. I argue that through their allusions to Aeschylus, the recognition scenes in *Electra* and *Iphigenia among the Taurians* can be read as metapoetic reflections on the constraints and conventions of dramatic composition and plot construction. In this way, Euripides invites his audience to recognize and appreciate the poetic challenges of composing a dramatic performance, through metaphor, word-play, metapoetic suggestions, and intertextual markers. *Iphigenia among the Taurians* and *Orestes* both draw metapoetic attention to their 'reversal' plots through technical language, and *Orestes* is an especially complex remodelling of the

[27] Edmunds (2001) xiii.
[28] See Wright (2005) 86–110 and cf. Allan (2008) 18–22.
[29] Garner (1990).
[30] Swift (2010), and in her database of lyric allusions in Greek tragedy, accessible at http://lyricallusions.classics.ox.ac.uk.

Oresteia's plot structure. Again, the audience is invited to reflect on the drama as a composition, and in all cases intertextual elements are shown to be thematic as well as linguistic responses to the Aeschylean model. Euripides' *Electra* is a challenging tragedy to open with, but it should become clear by the end of this study that it is not unique, and is perhaps most comparable to Euripides' *Hippolytus*[31] in signposting its existence as a reactionary poetic construct in a wide variety of ways.

Euripides' *Electra* also features in Chapter 2 for the way it rewrites the famous Iliadic shield of Achilles *ekphrasis*. Euripides' evocation of artistic media in his dramas has been well studied,[32] but the extent to which his *ekphraseis* tend to be intertextual has not been widely discussed. In Chapter 2 I link several examples of Euripidean *ekphrasis* with the intertextual models to which they respond (literary or artistic), demonstrating that a framework of literary appropriateness is important throughout, whether thematic, structural, or intertextual. In addition to the arms of Achilles in *Electra*, I discuss the temple architecture of *Iphigenia among the Taurians* and *Ion*, the catalogue of ships in *Iphigenia at Aulis*, and, most extensively, the transformation of Aeschylus' shield *ekphraseis* from *Seven Against Thebes* in Euripides' *Phoenician Women*. Language of signs and decipherment permeate Euripides' *ekphraseis*, forming poetic riddles and inviting comparison with the source of each *ekphrasis*.[33] Where descriptions of images form part of an intertextual relationship I use evidence from archaic and classical art to demonstrate audience familiarity. Euripides' engagement with Homer is less charged than his response to Aeschylus, and I suggest that the latter should be linked conceptually to the Greek practice of combative literary capping, drawing on the work of Derek Collins and Jon Hesk.[34] Euripides invites the audience, through this process, to consider his *ekphraseis* as *more appropriate* to their contexts than the models to which they respond. Where Euripides has tended to be viewed as provocatively 'inappropriate' in some of his poetic techniques,[35] his interest in the

[31] See Ch. 3. pp. 146–52, Ch. 4, pp. 196–7, 201, 227, ch. 5, p. 288–91.

[32] See e.g. Barlow (2008) [1971], Zeitlin (1994), Stieber (2011).

[33] In a different context, Goldhill (2007*b*) 19 defines the function of *ekphrasis* as part of a game which produces, and is engaged in by, the cultured citizen.

[34] Collins (2004), Hesk (2007).

[35] Arnott (1973) 62, Michelini (1987) 71, Croally (1994) 237. Knox (1979) 254 uses the term 'incongruous'.

appropriateness of ekphrastic imagery suggests that he is far more traditional in this respect than has generally been acknowledged.[36]

Texts more than intertexts form the basis of inquiry in Chapter 3, which offers a new perspective on references to writing in Euripides, as metapoetic reflections on the composition of tragedy. Analysing the motif of writing in Greek tragedy, I show that Euripides' engagement with writing is entirely different from the other tragedians. Aeschylus and Sophocles systematically privilege the medium of orality over writing, as emblematized by their regular use of the metaphor of writing as memory. For Euripides, who never uses this metaphor, writing functions in combination with speech to ensure successful authorial control. I argue that writing in Euripides is associated self-consciously with *mythopoiēsis* 'the creation of myth', and show that Euripidean dramas regularly draw attention to the novelty of their plots, both through references to written texts and through exploitation of the term *mythos* (meaning 'fiction', as I argue) at key moments in the plot where Euripides deviates from tradition. Finally, I suggest that such sophisticated literary technique confirms that a portion of Euripides' target audience were members of a highly literate circle, who probably had access to written copies of Greek plays.

Each of the first three chapters analyses, from different perspectives, several Euripidean tragedies that dramatize events related to the Trojan War expedition and its aftermath. Chapter 4 offers a closer look at some of the major Euripidean Trojan War dramas and their relationship with epic and with earlier tragedies. The importance of Sophocles as a source becomes most apparent in this chapter, and the difference in the way Euripides responds to tragic and epic models is confirmed in further detail. Euripides positions his tragedies as rivals to previous treatments of the same mythological episode by Sophocles or Aeschylus, but as continuations of epic events couched in the authority of Homer or the Cyclic epics. The satyr-drama *Cyclops*, by contrast, is uniquely cast as a rival version of a Homeric episode. I argue that terms such as *deuteros* 'second', *dissos* 'double', *kainos* 'new', are metapoetically loaded in these and other Euripidean plays as triggers for audience recognition of novelties or continuations in

[36] On appropriateness as a traditional concern in Greek poetics, see especially Ford (2002) 12–22. Wright (2010) argues, in a different context, that Euripidean poetics are traditional.

relation to earlier sources, in addition to the term *mythos*, whose importance was analysed in Chapter 3.

Throughout this study, it is suggested that recognizing the relationship between Euripidean drama and its sources exposes important social, theological, or political implications in Euripides' new versions. After extensive analysis of various Euripidean plays, we return, in Chapter 5, to the main questions we set out to answer. What is so different about Euripides? Why have scholars tended to associate his dramas with comedy? Metapoetry is not, in itself, what distinguishes Euripides from Aeschylus and Sophocles, both of whom are capable of sophisticated intertextual and metatheatrical feats in their tragedies, and (more overtly) in their satyr-dramas. Rather it is the pervasiveness, multiplicity, and novelty of metapoetic techniques in Euripides that give his dramas a distinctive tone. Many of the strategies he employs are also to be found in old comedy, which, I suggest, helps to account for our sense that there is an affinity between Euripidean drama and old comedy. I suggest, *pace* Oliver Taplin, that (Aristophanic) comedy and (Euripidean) tragedy *did* share 'their toys',[37] in the sense that metapoetry in Greek drama often takes the form of a ludic riddle. At the same time I agree with Taplin's assessment of tragedy and comedy as 'non-identical twins',[38] because the manner in which Euripides exploits these techniques *implicitly* in his tragedies is firmly within the boundaries of the tragic genre. Euripides was in many ways composing within a framework of traditional Greek poetics, but he constantly found ways to innovate through metapoetics without breaching the constraints of tragic performance conventions.

One similarity between Euripides and Aristophanes, also discussed in Chapter 5, is that they both seem to have been anxious about their position in the dramatic and literary canon. Referring to anxiety in a poetic context inevitably evokes Harold Bloom's 'anxiety of influence' model, and to a certain extent Bloom's theory is relevant. For anyone who works on ancient literature, Bloom's assertion that Shakespeare, and therefore any poet earlier than Shakespeare, 'belongs to the giant age . . . before the anxiety of influence became central to poetic consciousness',[39] is clearly as unfounded as the proposition that the novel

[37] Taplin (1996) 188. [38] Taplin (1996) 188. [39] Bloom (1973) 11.

was invented in the eighteenth century.[40] Nevertheless some of Bloom's insights run parallel to my arguments. For example, his insistence that 'poetic influence need not make poets less original',[41] and his general notion of 'parent' poems[42] with which the next poetic generation engages, could easily describe the metapoetic conditions of Euripides' drama. Overall, however, I have avoided dense theorization in this study and prioritized analysis of text and context, performative, cultural, and political.

The ancient caricature of Euripides as a bookworm with an extensive library also lies behind this study of complex and sophisticated metapoetic technique in Euripides' plays. Euripides was characterized as bookish by Aristophanes (*Frogs* 943, 1409) and in later antiquity (Athenaeus 1.4.3a), and it is a copy of Euripides' *Andromeda* that Dionysus claims to have read in *Frogs* (52–4). Nick Lowe has analysed Aristophanes as a book-writer and book-reader,[43] and several scholars have discussed the existence of an educated reading public that was expanding in the late fifth century BC in Athens, and became even more widespread in the fourth century.[44] A fragment of an unidentified play by the fifth-century comic poet Eupolis (fr. 327) refers to a book market, and the writings of Anaxagoras are presented as being well known to literate gentlemen in Plato (*Apology* 26d), to cite just a couple of examples of evidence for the circulation of literary texts. It was common practice to publish dramatic texts in Athens, although, as Martin Revermann discusses, the exact nature and extent of these publications is extremely difficult to recover with any certainty.[45] The issue of the extent of a reading public for fifth-century tragedy remains a vexed one, but it seems clear that there *was* such a circle of which Euripides, Aristophanes, and others were a part, and that they had access to written copies of plays.[46] The notorious line in *Frogs* (1114) where it is claimed that each spectator

[40] Doody (1996) 1–11 gives an overview of the various scholarly claims concerning the 'origins' of the novel, which regularly marginalize or ignore the ancient novels.
[41] Bloom (1973) 7.
[42] Bloom (1973) 14–15.
[43] Lowe (1993).
[44] Lowe (1993), Marshall (1996), Revermann (2006*a*) 14.
[45] Revermann (2006*a*) 16.
[46] Cf. Citti (1994) 165–6. Pucci (1999) 222 refers to Greek tragedy's 'readers' ('lecteurs') and discusses the different approaches to writing myth in the three great tragedians. He argues that Aeschylus' writing is characterized by a discourse of persuasion (213–22), that Sophocles' writing is theologically enigmatic (222), and

has a book and understands (or learns: μανθάνει) the clever stuff does not mean that every audience member actually had a book-roll to hand. Still, it creates a logical connection between reading and understanding cleverness in a dramatic context, and the presence of a portion of literate readers among the audience helps to explain the sophisticated intertextual negotiations developed by Euripides as one of their number. At the same time, however, exploitation of striking and unusual language, images, and visual echoes means that literacy is not necessarily a prerequisite for audience understanding of a drama's metapoetic suggestions. Cognitive psychology has shown that pictures and language dense in imagery are easiest for the mind to recall with an associated context, so that an audience familiar with the language and visual recollection of an earlier performance might recognize allusions to that performance especially through unusual and evocative imagery.[47] Erudite and popular are not mutually exclusive categories in poetic performance.

The quotation at the opening of this Introduction is the first sentence in Jan Bremer's essay 'Aristophanes on his own poetry'. I deliberately omitted reference to the title because Bremer's statement is about the self-consciousness of poets in general. Of course it describes Aristophanes, but it equally well describes Euripides, as I hope this study will demonstrate.

that Euripides' writing is the writing of *sophia* (223–33). Wright (2012) Ch. 5, specifically treats the old comedians as 'readers'.

[47] An interesting new study by Colleen Chaston (2010) links contemporary cognitive psychology regarding the functions of images in thought processes with ancient views on art and memory, relating modern theories of image recall with Simonides' alleged claim that poetry is a painting that speaks (39). Chaston's three case studies focus on the visual impact of tragic props on the audience, both actual props (as in the case of the urn in Sophocles' *Electra* or the mask of Dionysus in Euripides' *Bacchae*) or imagined (as in the case of the shields of the seven attackers in Aeschylus' *Seven Against Thebes*). For a discussion of relevant theories of cognitive psychology, see Chaston (2010) 36–65 with further references.

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1

Euripides and the *Oresteia*

Of the surviving Euripidean tragedies, four are related to the subject matter of Aeschylus' *Oresteia* and respond to it in significant ways: *Electra*, *Iphigenia among the Taurians*, *Orestes*, *Iphigenia in Aulis*. It seems probable, if not certain, that Euripides saw the *Oresteia* performed in 458 BC as a young man, and probable also that he attended reperformances of the trilogy after Aeschylus' death in 456 BC.[1] There remains disagreement, however, as to the purpose of allusions to the *Oresteia*. For some, perhaps influenced by the Aristophanic caricature in *Frogs*, Euripides is criticizing his predecessor and attempting to present himself as the superior, or at least more novel, poet.[2] For others, Euripides is paying homage to the great tragedian.[3] In this chapter I argue that Euripides' engagement with Aeschylus has a primarily metapoetic function in provoking recognition of Euripidean tragedy as a sophisticated dramatic composition within an established tradition. Winnington-Ingram implied as much when he discussed Euripides' allusions to Aeschylus as 'not malice so much as an exhibition of cleverness. . . . If Aeschylus was fair game, so too were the stage conventions . . .'. For Winnington-Ingram, however, the issue remained one of 'scor[ing] points at the expense of the archaic

[1] Most scholars assume that the *Oresteia* was reperformed in the 420s. See Newiger (1961) 427–30, and Revermann (2006*a*) 66–87 on reperformance culture in 5th-cent. Athens. Biles (2007) has recently challenged the notion that Aeschylean dramas were reperformed posthumously at the City Dionysia, though he accepts (210–11) that there was a general culture of reperformance in 5th-cent. Athens and suggests that the Rural Dionysia may have had a role in 'keeping Aeschylus alive'.

[2] Euripidean allusions to Aeschylus are often referred to as 'parody' with negative connotations of criticism (e.g. Bond (1974), Hammond (1984)).

[3] e.g. Wolff (1992) 329 and cf. Collard (1975) *ad Suppliants* 846–56.

technique of the older poet'.[4] Similarly, Froma Zeitlin, who brilliantly exposed the multitude of literary sources to which *Orestes* responds, including the *Oresteia*, nevertheless maintained that 'the firm polarities of Aeschylean drama are undermined, mocked, and finally negated'.[5]

Intertextuality with Aeschylus is rather, I suggest, part of a broader Euripidean programme of metapoetic strategies. Intertextual markers serve as triggers for an audience to acknowledge that they are watching a poetic composition. The scene is then set, so to speak, for inviting the audience to reflect on the process of poetic composition and the constraints of stage production. In both *Electra* and *Iphigenia among the Taurians* the old literary trope of the recognition scene is explored, framed with intertextual references to the *Oresteia*. *Iphigenia among the Taurians* and *Orestes* both underline their own status as 'reversal' plots through the technical language of plot construction, and *Orestes* can be read as a complex and multidirectional remodelling of the *Oresteia*'s plot structure. In all of these responses to the *Oresteia*, the audience is invited to reflect on the technical challenge of composing tragic poetry. In each case, structural elements and metapoetic suggestions are linked with a response to thematic concerns in Aeschylus: justice, theology, politics.[6]

ELECTRA

It is in *Electra* that Euripides presents his boldest allusions to the *Oresteia*, and also his most controversial. The recognition tokens from Aeschylus' *Libation Bearers* are famously evoked only to be rejected, and though some scholars sought to excise the allusions as interpolations, it seems clear that the scene is genuine.[7] It also fits into

[4] Winnington-Ingram (2003) [1969] 51.

[5] Zeitlin (2003*a*) [1980] 316. Euben (1986) 236 has an almost identical analysis. Burnett (1971) 205 also saw Euripides as attacking and criticizing Aeschylus.

[6] The relationship between *Iphigenia at Aulis* and the *Oresteia* is discussed in Ch. 3.

[7] Fraenkel 1950, vol. III, appendix D (815–26) revived the argument that lines 518–44 of Euripides' *Electra* were interpolated. Bain (1977), West (1980), Basta Donzelli (1980) and Kovacs (1989) all raised objections to authenticity of specific passages within this scene. Lloyd-Jones (1961), Bond (1974), Davies (1998), Raeburn (2000) 157–60, and Gallagher (2003), however, all show persuasively that the scene is not interpolated and is dramatically relevant, even necessary. The editions of Denniston (1939) and Cropp (1988) defend the authenticity of the recognition scene. Wright

a broader pattern of allusions to the *Oresteia* at other important junctures in *Electra*, and throughout Euripides' Atreid saga plays. The crux of the enigma in Electra's rationalizations of Aeschylean recognition tokens is that her arguments are problematic in several ways and events show that she is mistaken. Although she rejects them, the lock of hair and the footprint at Agamemnon's tomb *do* turn out to indicate Orestes' return. What, then, is Euripides doing? If he is criticizing Aeschylus' tokens as unrealistic, why does his own character present problematic arguments with erroneous conclusions? If he is trying to present a new and better way of producing a recognition scene, then why does he revert to an even older recognition trope—the Odyssean scar? If he is parodying Aeschylus, why are Aeschylus' tokens ultimately validated? I suggest that if we read the scene as a metapoetic commentary that is a self-conscious invitation to reflect on the conventions of dramatic production, these questions are no longer important. It is not so much Aeschylus who is a target of parody, rather it is poetic convention which is brought under scrutiny.[8]

Rejecting Recognition, Rejecting Convention

Electra has a complex role in the recognition sequence but she seems incapable of interpreting the signs in accordance with poetic convention. Not only does she refuse to acknowledge the potential significance of the lock of hair and footprint, she also fails to notice Orestes' scar although she had been present during the fall that caused it.[9] On a Saussurean semiological reading, Electra's inability

(2008*a*) 121–2, detects a reference to the recognition scene of Euripides' *Electra* at *Orestes* 233–4, which gives further weight to arguments for authenticity.

[8] Rose (1993) stresses the complexity of parody and shows that it is more than a tool for either ridicule or homage, and Dentith (2000) 17–19 discusses how parody as a literary device does not necessarily direct its polemic against the parodied text. Pucci (1967) drew attention to the fact that recognition scenes in early Greek poetry are all highly stylized and improbable in nature, but saw the recognition scene in Euripides' *Electra* in general terms as 'a criticism of the contemporary naïve belief in the existence of self-supporting evidence' (371).

[9] On the issue of Electra's failure to interpret signs, see also Gallagher (2003) esp. 402–4. Gellie (1981) 4 summarizes several ways in which Electra 'tends to get things wrong'—e.g. she initially thinks Orestes and Pylades are thieves, she interprets the victory cry after Aegisthus' murder as a cry of defeat, she fails to recognize Clytemnestra's arriving retinue. For Gellie, these errors are part of Electra's self-delusion.

to interpret such signs renders her in some ways socially dysfunctional in nature. Not only is she dysfunctional as a woman and wife, living in an unconsummated marriage,[10] she is also incapable of functioning effectively within the microcosm of the tragic recognition scene.[11] During the recognition sequence, Electra refuses to recognize dramatic conventions. Similarly after the murder of Aegisthus, Electra laments that there are no messengers at precisely the moment when tragic convention calls for a messenger (*El.* 759). When the messenger appears forthwith (*El.* 761), she even fails to recognize the servant who is known to her (*El.* 765–8).

Electra's semiological ineptitude during the recognition scene is linked to the flawed logic she puts forward in her dismissal of the recognition tokens. When asked to compare the colour of her hair to that of the lock left at the tomb (*El.* 520–1), Electra responds (*a*) that she cannot imagine brave Orestes coming back in stealth (*El.* 524–6) and (*b*) that her hair is combed and feminine and so cannot be like her brother's (*El.* 537–8). There are obvious problems with her arguments. If Orestes is an exile with a bounty on his head (*El.* 33), how else should he come back with any chance of success except by stealth (as he does in all versions of this episode)? Secondly, how can Electra now claim to have feminine combed hair when she has previously complained about her hair being filthy (*El.* 184) and cropped (*El.* 148, cf. 108)? The incongruity between Electra's claim about her hair and her actual appearance would have been all the more apparent to a theatre audience.[12] Indeed the audience has seen Orestes and his hair and would be in a position to judge whether or not his hair resembles his sister's.

Later in the scene, the Old Man asks Electra if there is a piece of weaving which she might recognize, a weaving, he says, in which he spirited Orestes away from death (*El.* 540). The Old Man's question is

[10] On Electra's problematic social status see Zeitlin (2003*b*) [1970].

[11] Cf. Goldhill (1986) 84–5, who has linked the sociological importance of recognizing signs and relationships to the prominence of recognition-driven plots in Greek tragedy.

[12] Based on the fact that Euripides was known for presenting characters in rags (he was parodied for this in Aristophanes at e.g. *Ach.* 414–17, *Frogs* 842), and the repeated references to Electra's unattractive hair and attire before the recognition scene, it seems reasonable to suppose that she was indeed presented to the audience with cropped and unkempt hair, thus emphasizing the problematic nature of her logic here. If Electra's hair is cropped (as Helen's is at the end of Euripides' *Helen*), then it might well have resembled Orestes' hair as seen by the theatre audience.

strange. If he is the one who saved Orestes, why doesn't he know that there was no piece of weaving as Electra emphatically explains? The reference to a piece of weaving is so obviously contrived that it stands in itself as a metaphor for this scene's intertextuality with Aeschylus. In Aeschylus, Electra's handiwork seems to be a feature of Orestes' clothing (*LB* 231–2). In Euripides, Electra not only denies her ability to weave at the time Orestes left, she also ridicules the idea that a grown man would be wearing the same clothes he had as an infant (*El.* 541–4). Euripides' character wilfully distorts the intended meaning of the Old Man. He is not suggesting that Orestes as a young man will be wearing the same swaddling clothes in which he was saved as an infant. The implication is clearly that Orestes would have held onto such a keepsake.

Electra had earlier complained about the miseries of her daily existence, including the fact that she must weave her own clothes (*El.* 307).[13] Given that Greek princesses are often presented as skilled weavers (e.g. Helen in *Iliad* 3 and *Odyssey* 4, Penelope in *Odyssey* 2, Iphigenia in the *IT*, discussed below), Electra perhaps displays an unnatural attitude in her rejection of weaving.[14] She loathes it as a chore, which she emphasizes she must perform herself (*El.* 307) but has paradoxically rejected the chorus's offer of providing her with fine clothes, as David Raeburn reminds us.[15] Electra may be self-obsessed but she is not at all self-aware. She had proclaimed her exclusion from dances with brides (*El.* 178–80), for example, while actually dancing with the chorus of such potential brides in the *parodos* during a lyric exchange (*amoibaion*) that is metrically close to her preceding monody,[16] thus emphasizing her organic participation in this chorus.[17] Electra's ironic lack of self-awareness in terms of choral

[13] Several scholars have found Electra's complaints unreasonable. For O'Brien (1964) 'Orestes as penny philosopher is outdone by Electra as the most ostentatious martyr in Greek tragedy.' Arnott (1981) 181 calls Orestes and Electra 'deplorable, dehaloed hoodlums devoid of heroism or redeeming characteristics'. Raeburn (2000) also reads Electra's actions as 'self-martyrdom' (153). See, however, Lloyd (1986) for a defence of the characters in terms of cultural and dramatic context.

[14] This does not make her masculine, however. As Mossman (2001) has shown, Electra's speech is very much identifiably female in pattern.

[15] Raeburn (2000) 153.

[16] On the metrical links between the *parodos* and the monody, and on the identity of the chorus as 'ready for marriage', see Cropp (1988) *ad* 167–212.

[17] Euripides uses the striking metapoetic technique of choruses referring to the absence of choruses in *Trojan Women* and in *Cyclops*, as discussed in Ch. 4.

participation is repeated when she claims once more to be deprived of 'choruses' (*El.* 310), and is later mirrored in her lack of engagement with the recognition tokens and in the excessive length of time it takes her to recognize Orestes. Raeburn proposes that Electra resists recognizing Orestes because that would 'undermine the basis of her life as she has come to live it'.[18] This persuasive psychological reading suggests that Electra maintains an attitude of denial that also explains her rejection of the recognition tokens.

A perceptive audience will understand the significance of weaving, not only as an intertextual reference to Aeschylus (after mention of the lock of hair and footprint) but also as a symbol with a strong potential for metapoetic meaning. Since weaving is a metaphor for poetry, it has the potential to act as a *mise en abîme*, a refraction in miniature of the story in which it features. Such a self-conscious literary technique is already exploited in the *Iliad* where Helen weaves the battles of the Greeks and Trojans in a tapestry (*Iliad* 3.121–7), as several scholars have discussed.[19] Whereas Helen engages with her mythological role as the cause of the Trojan War by recording its events in her weaving, the lack of weaving in *Electra* can conversely be linked with Electra's failure to engage with or 'recognize' her own mythological role. No subject is mentioned for Electra's weaving, in contrast to Helen's, so that even hypothetically the weaving represents a metaphorically basic plot rather than elaborate poetic craft (see below on weaving as a metaphor for plotting in *Ion*). While Electra rejects the recognition signs, the audience, on the other hand, experience their own *anagnōrisis* 'recognition' of the scene. Simon Goldhill has discussed the importance of audience comprehension of a narrative of recognition in Greek poetry.[20] He has noted in the context of this specific scene how Euripides deliberately draws attention to poetic convention which should by tradition remain unrecognized in order to function.[21] Euripides thus stretches the

[18] Raeburn (2000) 158.

[19] That Helen's weaving in the *Iliad* symbolizes the act of poetic composition was noted already by the scholiast on *Iliad* 3.126–7. On the metapoetic significance of Helen's weaving, see Kennedy (1986), Wright (2005) 152, Roisman (2006). Fletcher (2009) argues that weaving in Euripides' *Ion* functions as a *mise en abîme*.

[20] Goldhill (1991) 1–24, esp. 5 and 24, where the explicit formulation of reader/audience involvement is made, and it is noted that *anagignōskein* means both 'to read' and 'to recognize' in Greek.

[21] Goldhill (1986) 249.

dramatic illusion almost to breaking point while still remaining within the confines of the tragic genre, which technically does not allow such freedom (a freedom more commonly associated with old comedy). The strategy is indeed typical of Euripides, who puts pressure on the conventions of dramatic illusion elsewhere in *Electra* and in other plays.[22] With the recognition scene, Euripides challenges his audience to recognize for themselves that tokens of identity are unnaturalistic and arbitrary and yet cannot be dispensed with if the fictional poetic construct is to succeed. A scar is perhaps more naturalistic and convincing as a recognition proof than a lock of hair or a footprint, but it will only work if the scar is recognized by the appropriate person. In this case Electra fails to recognize the scar and the plot must be reactivated by the Old Man. It is the Old Man's exchange with Electra which, as I argue in the following discussion, can be read as a further metapoetic exploration of poetic convention.

Metaphor and Metapoetic Discourse: Electra and the Old Man

The issue of dramatic conventions and the question of what makes good poetry is engaged with in the recognition scene on a metapoetic level which (to my knowledge) has to date gone unnoticed. The text of the exchange between Electra and the Old Man invites a secondary meta-level of interpretation where poetic metaphor plays a crucial

[22] Electra's assumption that there are no messengers (*El.* 759), mentioned above, draws attention to the convention of messenger-speeches (cf. Winnington-Ingram (2003) 54–5 and Goldhill (1986) 251). Goldhill (1986) 257 links the final stanza of the Golden Lamb ode to a reflection on the status of the play as myth; see also Marshall (2000) on metatheatricality in *Electra*.

In other Euripidean plays also we find metatheatrical comments on dramatic conventions. At *Medea* 260 the title character asks the chorus for their complicity if she is able to find a *mēchanē*, literally 'means' but also 'stage-crane', with which to punish Jason. A similar double-meaning is exploited at *Helen* 813 where the title character comments on her and Menelaus' desperate situation, trapped as they are in the kingdom of the barbarian Theoclymenus: δεῖ δὲ μηχανῆς τινος 'We need a *mēchanē*', i.e. 'a plan', but 'a stage-crane' would do very nicely for an escape here, especially given that Helen's apotheosis is hinted at throughout the play (see Torrance (2009*a*) on this last point), and the crane is reserved for divine or semi-divine figures. Winnington-Ingram (2003) 52 discusses how Pylades' muteness in the final scenes of *Orestes* is underlined in order to make the audience recognize that there will be a *deus ex machina* (who will have the role of the third speaking actor). On Euripides' most metatheatrical play, *Bacchae*, see C. Segal (1982) esp. 215–71.

role. The fact that this scene has some strong affinities with old comedy in its staging (particularly in its plethora of props), and in its overt intertextuality, dovetails with its metapoetic agenda, radical for tragedy but more familiar in old comedy.[23] The Old Man arrives with a suckling lamb from his flock (*El.* 494–5), and garlands and cheeses (*El.* 496). The prop that is given the most attention, however, is the old wine of strong vintage, mentioned last and described over three lines (*El.* 497–9). Interestingly, the word 'wine' is not used, rather the Old Man says that he has brought *παλαιὸν τε θησαύρισμα Διονύσου τόδε* 'this old treasure of Dionysus' (*El.* 497).[24] The expression could well function as a metaphorical signal for the passage from the *Libation Bearers* to which he will shortly refer. An old tragedy by Aeschylus might well be described as an 'old treasure of Dionysus'. Poetic song is a *thēsauros* 'treasure' of the Muses in Timotheus' *Persians* fr. 791.232,[25] Pindar refers to a *thēsauros* 'treasury' of song (*Pythian* 6.7–8), and Hesiod discusses the *thēsauros* 'treasure' of the tongue (*Works and Days* 719–20). Dionysus is, of course, both god of wine and god of dramatic poetry, and wine is a common metaphor for poetry in classical sources.

Already in Homer, wine is said to inspire singing and dancing by Odysseus at *Odyssey* 14.462–7, when he tells Eumaeus the story which hints at his need for a cloak. The association of wine with poetic creation is probably best known from Archilochus fr. 120 (West) where wine is presented as the inspiration for performing a dithyramb. Other lyric poets also exploit the metaphor. Wine inspires song in Pindar at *Nemean* 9.48–50.[26] At *Olympian* 9.47–9 Pindar announces treatment of an old theme through a new song with a wine metaphor: *αἴνει δὲ παλαιὸν μὲν οἶνον, ἄνθεα δ' ὕμνων | νεωτέρων* 'praise wine that is old, but the blooms of hymns that are newer'.[27] The opening of *Olympian* 7.1–10 compares the nectar of poetry to the

[23] Raeburn (2000) 157 notes that the props in this scene are 'Aristophanic in number and character'. For an evaluation of metapoetry in old comedy and in Euripides, see Ch. 5, pp. 282–98.

[24] Diggle (1981), Cropp (1988), and Kovacs (1998) all print Scaliger's emendation *πολιόν* 'old', 'hoary' for L's *παλαιόν* 'old' which is metrically anomalous. For discussion of the issue see Denniston (1939) *ad* 497 who suggests that the variant *παλεός* 'old' might be restored.

[25] Cf. Hordern (2002) *ad loc.*

[26] See D. Steiner (1986) 20–1.

[27] Translation by Race (1997) 153.

presentation of a foaming wine bowl at a symposium in an extended simile, and the opening of *Isthmian* 6 speaks of mixing a wine-bowl of the Muses' songs in honour of the addressee.[28] Sappho (2.13–16) uses the verb *οἰνοχοέω* 'to pour wine' metaphorically to mean 'infusing' festivities in honour of Aphrodite.[29] The fifth-century elegiac poet Dionysius Chalcus uses the same verb to describe the production of song (fr. 4.1 *ὕμνους οἰνοχοεῖν* 'pouring out songs like wine'). He imagines his poetry as being 'drunk' in a symposium context (fr. 1.1–2 *δέχου τήνδε προπινομένην | τὴν ἀπ' ἐμοῦ ποίησιν* 'receive from me this poetry drunk to [your] health'; cf. fr. 1.5 *συμπόσιον κοσμῶν* 'arranging the symposium').[30]

Old comedy regularly exploited the metaphor of poetry as wine and associated wine with poetic composition. The consumption of wine is referred to as an inspiration for creation in Aristophanes, at *Knights* 99–100.[31] Aristophanes (fr. 688) compares Athenian dislike of harsh stiff poets to a dislike of harsh Pramnian wine.[32] Cratinus seems to have accused the rival comic poet Ecphantides of being cloudy wine (fr. 462).[33] As regards his own metapoetic presentation, Cratinus apparently cultivated a poetic persona of being inspired by wine, and recent scholarship on old comedy has argued that his *Wine-flask* (*Pytine*) was the culmination of a development of this persona, specifically inspired by Archilochus, as well as a response to Aristophanes' caricature of Cratinus in *Knights* produced in 424.[34] Sympotic activity is also important in several Aristophanic plays.[35] For example, in *Acharnians* Aristophanes exploits a double

[28] Cf. also Pindar fr. 354 with Nünlist (1998) 203.

[29] As translated by West (1993) 37.

[30] Poetry is also presented as thirst-quenching in Pindar (e.g. *Pythian* 9.103–4, *Nemean* 3.6–7; see Nünlist (1998) 194–5).

[31] Slater (2002*a*) 70 connects Dionysiac inspiration in *Knights* with plot development. Drinking water by contrast has the opposite effect (cf. Cratinus fr. 203, Epicharmus fr. 131, Phrynichus fr. 74).

[32] Wilkins (2000) 243–56 gives an excellent overview of comedy's association of wine with poetic composition.

[33] Ruffell (2002) 146.

[34] The primacy of Archilochus in the construction of the intoxicated persona in comedy may be linked with iambic invective; see Biles (2002) 173. Bakola (2008) 12 discusses *Acharnians* 1166–73 to argue that Cratinus 'had presented himself through Dionysiac, intoxicated poetics before 425'. On Cratinus as the Archilochus of comedy, see Bakola (2010) 59–63, 178.

[35] A. Bowie (1997).

entendre where *spondai* means both 'treaties' and 'wine libations'.[36] Moreover, comedy associates itself with tragedy through the vinous term 'trugedy'. Modelled on 'tragedy', 'trugedy' is an alternative word for 'comedy' with particular implications of paratragedy.[37] It is etymologically connected with 'the root common to *trugaō* (gather in a crop of grapes), *trux* (unfermented wine), and *trugē* (vintage)',[38] and it is no accident that Trygaeus in *Peace*, whose name means 'vintager',[39] is cast as a 'trugedian'.[40] In tragedy itself the Muses are associated with wine. A fragment of Aeschylus' *Thracian Women* (84a) relates that Ajax was a lover of the Muses and the symposium (*φιλόμουσοι*, *φιλοσυμπόται*). A passage from Euripides' *Antiope* (fr. 183) refers to 'the wine-loving Muse' (*μοῦσαν φίλοινον*). In Chapter 4, I argue that wine is an important metaphor for poetic creation in Euripides' *Cyclops*.

Of the tragedians, it was Aeschylus who was strongly associated with wine in the biographical tradition. Edith Hall reminds us of the anecdote recording that Aeschylus became a tragedian after falling asleep in a vineyard and being visited by Dionysus in a dream.[41] Bakola's argument that Cratinus identified himself with Aeschylus[42] is all the more interesting given that both their poetic personas are strongly linked with wine. If Aeschylus and his poetry were popularly associated with wine, the metapoetic potential of the Old Man's 'old treasure of Dionysus' becomes all the more plausible, and the symbolism of adding 'newer blooms' to praiseworthy 'old wine' (i.e. previous poetry) is paralleled in Pindar's *Olympian* 9 (47–9), quoted above.[43] In the case of *Electra* the 'treasure of Dionysus', both 'wine' and 'poetry' (as I am arguing) is also *παλαιόν* 'old', a term whose cognates Euripides uses in some cases to refer to earlier tragedies. At *Helen* 1056, Menelaus tells Helen that 'there is something old-fashioned' about her escape plan (*παλαιότης γὰρ τῷ λόγῳ γ' ἔνεστί τις*).

[36] See A. Bowie (1997) 15–18, Pucci (2007) 126.

[37] Cf. Taplin (1983) 333.

[38] Hall (2006) 330; cf. A. Bowie (1993) 138.

[39] On Trygaeus' name and its significance, see Hall (2006) 328–33 and Kanavou (2011) 98–100.

[40] Hall (2006) 333–5.

[41] Hall (2006) 333 n. 52, referring to Pausanias 1.21.3. Wilkins (2000) 248 also notes that the biographical tradition paints Aeschylus and Aristophanes as drunks.

[42] Bakola (2010) 24–9.

[43] Poetry is a bloom with a potential for repeated flowering in Pindar; see D. Steiner (1986) 28–39.

The plan is metapoetically 'old-fashioned' because it involves the false report of Menelaus' death, a ruse used by Orestes in *Libation Bearers* (674–90) and in Sophocles' *Electra* (44–50, 673–763) where in each case his death is announced in order to effect his plan. In *Orestes* it is made clear that Helen is the same old Helen (*Or.* 129: ἔστι δ' ἡ πάλαι γυνή). The audience of *Orestes* should not now confuse the traditional vain and self-centred Helen of *Orestes* with Euripides' virtuous 'new Helen' from *Helen*, in the phrase coined by Aristophanes (*Thesm.* 850). We can see, then, that the 'old treasure of Dionysus', ostensibly referring to wine but metaphorically suggestive of poetry could plausibly be understood as a reference to an earlier poetic composition by Aeschylus, especially when we consider the connection between the 'old treasure' and the Aeschylean recognition tokens.

It is after the Old Man opens the wineskin (containing the 'treasure') and pours a libation on the grave mound that the parts of Aeschylean tragedy (the lock of hair and footprint) appear to him (as he recounts at *El.* 511–15; cf. 532–3).[44] The wine is described as ὀσμῇ κατῆρες σμικρὸν ἀλλ' ἐπεσβαλεῖν | ἡδὺ σκύφον τοῦδ' ἀσθενεστέρῳ ποτῷ 'having a good bouquet, a small amount, but sweet to add a cupful of it to a weaker drink' (*El.* 498–9). This is an apt metaphorical description of the intertext with Aeschylus. Clearly the engagement with Aeschylus signals admiration on one level (his poetry has a good bouquet).[45] The direct references to Aeschylus are also brief, focused on the recognition tokens (there is only a small amount of Aeschylean text in the play). Line 499 then casts Euripides' *Electra* on a metapoetic level as 'the weaker drink' which could be strengthened with a cupful of Aeschylus' *Libation Bearers*. It might seem odd, at first glance, that Euripides would cast his work as 'the weaker drink'. However, we must remember the wine metaphor here. It is well known that fifth-century Athenians diluted their wine heavily with water, and considered drinking strong or undiluted

[44] The lock of hair was a feature of Stesichorus' *Oresteia* fr. 217, but it seems that the footprint and weaving were Aeschylean additions.

[45] The wine in Euripides' *Cyclops*, which I argue (in Ch. 4) is a metapoetically loaded image, is also said to have a good bouquet (153). Cf. *Frogs* 1150 where the comic Aeschylus reprimands Dionysus for drinking wine with a bad bouquet after the god of drama joins Euripides in ridiculing Aeschylean verse. There is clearly a dual implication to drinking bad wine. On the one hand Dionysus has bad breath, but he is also uninspired and witless because of its bad bouquet.

wine to be highly uncivilized. According to Philochorus, it was Dionysus himself who first taught Amphictyon, the king of Athens, how to dilute wine with water (*FGrH* 328 F 5b, 19–20). The 'weaker drink' in the context of Athenian wine-drinking is the preferable alternative for the civilized individual. Similarly in terms of the poetic metaphor, the 'weaker drink' works well as the more positive image in terms of specifically Euripidean poetry. In the context of Aristophanes' *Frogs*, for example, where Euripides' character berates that of Aeschylus for his incomprehensibly dense language, he promotes his own freshly pruned clarity of expression (see especially *Frogs* 939–79). Aeschylus' potent poetry is contrasted with Euripides' arguably 'weaker' but clearer verse. Certainly the rejection of the Aeschylean recognition tokens in *Electra* would represent Euripides' rejection of the addition of this 'poetic potency' if we pursue the implications of the metaphor.

The way in which the tokens are rejected further suggests a self-conscious concern with being compared to previous poets. Electra is asked by the Old Man to compare the χρῶμα of the Aeschylean lock to that of her own hair to see if they are similar (*El.* 521).[46] χρῶμα commonly means colour or texture, but it can also be used to describe the texture of poetic and musical composition (as at Plato, *Republic* 601a–b). Exploiting such a potential double meaning in a technical term is paralleled in many instances of the language of craft in Euripides.[47] Reading on a metapoetic level, then, the question becomes one of textural composition where Electra refuses to engage in a comparison. The problem implicitly highlighted here is precisely the question of the poet's consciousness of his posteriority,[48] and the difficulty, especially in tragedy, of composing something novel, an issue which very much preoccupied Euripides (as we shall see in Chapter 4). At the same time the metapoetic discussion on tragic composition functions as the kind of *mise en abîme* which has aesthetic implications as the scene develops.[49]

[46] The request is hypothetical since there is no indication that the Old Man has taken the lock of hair away from the tomb; see Raeburn (2000) 160.

[47] See the detailed discussion of Stieber (2011) 337–427.

[48] The concepts of literary 'posteriority' and the 'crisis of posteriority' have been well discussed by Whitmarsh (2001) esp. ch. 1, in relation to Greek literature under the Roman empire.

[49] On the *mise en abîme* as a literary device, see Dällenbach (1989), esp. 98–101 on *mises en abîme* and potential for aesthetic debate.

The Old Man asks Electra (*El.* 532–3) to step into the ἴχνος 'footprint' or 'track' to see whether the βάσιν 'tread' (but also commonly 'base')[50] will be σύμμετρος 'of the same measure' as her own 'foot' (ποδί). The phrasing recalls *Libation Bearers* (esp. 209 and 228), but it can also be understood metapoetically. Is the Aeschylean 'foot', that is 'metrical foot' (cf. *LSJ s.v.* πούς IV) σύμμετρος 'of the same *metre*' as the 'base' of Euripides?[51] It is, in the sense that both passages are in iambics, but the metaphor of 'following in the footsteps of' seems to be evoked. Such a metaphor is used by Pindar in the context of a successful athlete following in the footsteps of his previously victorious grandfather (*Nemean* 6.15–16).[52] Electra's language implicitly underlines the problem of comparing oneself to a predecessor. How could the ποδῶν ἔκμακτρον literally 'the impress of feet' but potentially also 'the moulding/composition of (metrical) feet' be made ἐν κραταιλέῳ πέδῳ 'on rock-hard ground' (*El.* 534–5)? The expression is unusual. ἔκμακτρον is a *hapax legomenon* drawing attention to its derivation from the verb ἐκμάσσω used of artists moulding (cf. *LSJ s.v.* ἐκμάσσω II).[53] Furthermore, the phrase ἐν κραταιλέῳ πέδῳ is certainly Aeschylean and probably featured in the lost opening of *Libation Bearers*.[54] In any case the form κραταιλέῳ occurs only here and at *Agamemnon* 666. The Aeschylean phrase draws attention to the problems of verisimilitude encountered by a tragedian who must exploit tokens to effect a recognition scene. On a metapoetic level, however, the question 'how is it possible to compose poetry on [Aeschylus'] rock-hard ground?' also relates

[50] As in Euripides' *Theseus* (fr. 382.12), for example.

[51] Cf. Timotheus, *Persians* fr. 791.199–201 for this usage of σύμμετρος and Aristophanes' *Frogs* (1323–8) where Aeschylus' character attacks that of Euripides for irregularities of metrical feet in his poetry, using the term πούς. Ford (2002) 18 observes that the metrics lesson staged in Aristophanes' *Clouds* of 423 coincides with the 5th-cent. interest in the formal aspects of 'measuring' language through metre, as does the language of Critias in his elegiacs (Ford (2002) 43–4).

[52] The metaphor is found also at Plato, *Phaedrus* 276d; cf. *Theaetetus* 193, where matching footprints to their owners is important for achieving recognition and the interchange of feet in footprints can lead to the formation of mistaken opinions. An instance of the 'following in the footsteps of' metaphor in poetic terms is perhaps suggested by the *Homeric Hymn to Hermes* and Sophocles' *Trackers*, both of which present Apollo's first connection with the lyre and poetry as a result of following the tracks which lead to the cave of Hermes where the newly invented lyre is located.

[53] Stieber (2011) 373–80 shows how Euripides exploits the language of artistic moulding in other contexts.

[54] Kovacs (1998) 207 n. 15, Cropp (1988) *ad* 532–7.

directly to the issue of poetic posteriority and the constraints of composing tragedy within the confines of mythology. The metapoetic question implied in this formulation asks 'how can one make one's mark on established poetic tradition?'

There is a lacuna in the Old Man's next question to Electra but the surviving text is quite clear in asking about κερκίδος . . . ἐξύφασμα 'a finished piece of weaving from the shuttle' which Electra might recognize (*El.* 539). As we have seen, weaving is clearly a metaphor for the very process of composing tragedy, and the shuttle is often said to sing in poetry.[55] The choice of the rare term ἐξύφασμα (which occurs in this form only here in classical Greek according to *TLG*), is noteworthy. The question is whether or not there is a *finished* piece of weaving/composition. The answer, of course, is 'No'. Electra explains that she was too young to weave/compose at the time when the Old Man stole Orestes away from death (*El.* 540–2). That an unfinished piece of weaving can function as a metaphor for an incomplete plot in Euripides is clearest from his *Ion* where weaving is a central dramatic motif. Judith Fletcher has analysed the tragedy as a 'new narrative tapestry' combining intertextual allusions to Sophocles and Aeschylus (especially his *Oresteia*) with a 'challenge to the traditional story of Ion's parentage'.[56] It is through women's association with weaving and its metaphorical significance as a synonym for storytelling (e.g. *Ion* 196–8, 507), argues Fletcher, that the female characters 'take control of the script'.[57] Many scholars have discussed the potential significance of the *ekphrasis* of richly embroidered tapestries used by Ion to construct the tent where his new identity as the son of Xuthus is to be celebrated.[58] The audience is

[55] On the singing shuttle in Greek poetry see references in Dover (1993) on *Frogs* 1316.

[56] Fletcher (2009), quotations from 131.

[57] Fletcher (2009) 134.

[58] The imagery of the tapestries seems to replicate an Atheno-centric cosmos, with the activities of the celestial beings of the sky occupying the roof of the tent, the sides depicting Greek and barbarian ships poised for a naval battle, and the entrance embroidered with the legendary founder of Athens, Kekrops, half-man, half-snake, with his daughters. Goff (1988*b*) has argued persuasively that 'the tapestries on the tent constitute a meditation on Athenian identity articulated in terms of the relation between order and violence'; cf. Wolff (1965) 173. Stieber (2011) 273–336 has a detailed discussion of the evocation of Athenian sculpture, architecture, and weaving in *Ion*. On imagery of order and disorder, see Mastronarde (2003). For a reading of the astronomical imagery of the tent's ceiling as ominous, see Hannah (2002) 27–9. On

guided, through a common ekphrastic device, to interpret the beauty of the tapestries as 'wonders for men to behold' (*Ion* 1142: θαύματ' ἀνθρώποις ὁρᾶν).[59] The audience is left to make meaningful connections between the images, and is thus given a significant interpretative role where the messenger passes no comments.[60] It also seems important, however, to interpret the significance of the fact that the images are specifically *woven*. Ion's creation of a woven space in which he will be 'reborn' into a new life, through 'birth sacrifices' (*Ion* 653),[61] replicates his original state of birth where he was placed in a *woven* basket (*Ion* 37, 1393), and wrapped in an embroidered piece of weaving (*Ion* 1417–21). The woven ekphrastic enclosures thus function as a metaphor for Ion's story. In fact, when the Pythia reveals the original basket and tokens, left by Creusa, Ion exclaims that 'the new story (*mythos*) has been introduced' (*Ion* 1340: ὁ μῦθος εἰσενήνεκται νέος).[62] By unwittingly plotting the death of her son, Creusa 'has woven one terrible craft after another' (*Ion* 1279–80: ἐκ τέχνης τέχνην | οἵαν ἔπλεξε), but her control over the plot has completely collapsed by the end of the play as confirmed by Ion's command to 'stop weaving plots' (*Ion* 1410: παῦσαι πλέκουσα . . . πλοκάς). Creusa's 'unfinished' weaving (*Ion* 1419: οὐ τέλεον), which emerges as a recognition proof, thus reflects the failure of her revenge plot to reach its completion.[63]

The Old Man's reference in *Electra* to a *finished* piece of weaving is metapoetically reflective of the fact that he 'tries frantically to persuade [Electra] to see the obvious',[64] namely that the story has been all sewn up. If the weaving represents the story, then Electra denies its

the play's specific appeal to Athenians see also Cole (1997), Zacharia (2003), Swift (2008) 69–85.

[59] On the importance of this device in ancient *ekphrasis*, see Becker (1995) 29–38, and see further Ch. 2 on *ekphrasis* in Euripides.

[60] Zeitlin (1996) 326 notes that if visual images invite interpretation, this effect is heightened when celestial signs are represented since these are 'in themselves legitimate objects for divination'. Goff (1988*b*) 51 also observes that the tent 'challenges us to find a narrative within it'.

[61] On the thematic importance of the 'twice born' in this play see Zeitlin (1996) 300–13.

[62] Wolff (1965) 179 observed that 'the play is, in a sense, about myth itself'. For Euripides' common exploitation of the term *mythos* to mean 'fiction', see Ch. 3.

[63] Fletcher (2009) 138 sees the unfinished weaving as reflecting 'the incomplete narrative of Creusa's life until this moment'.

[64] Raeburn (2000) 159.

existence. At the same time, however, she considers the possibility of its existence when she says that even if there were a piece of weaving Orestes would not now have the same robes (*El.* 542–4). Following a metapoetic reading, the Old Man's reference to stealing Orestes away from death (540) is interesting as a further potential comment on the function of the poet. It is only through the poet that mythical characters are given life, and must be repeatedly given new life, new poetry, new 'robes' in order be preserved, evoking another common Greek metaphor of poetry as clothing.[65] If Euripides is going to produce his own 'Orestes-weaving', then his protagonists will have 'new clothes'. Euripidean characters often seem metamythologically aware of their own poetic legacy.[66] In *Electra*, by contrast, the title character adamantly refuses to engage with her own tragic mythology. She is *supposed to* recognize the signs of Orestes' return as do Electra in *Libation Bearers* and Chrysothemis in Sophocles' *Electra*,[67] but Euripides' Electra vehemently resists such pressure. Moreover, the language used in the exchange between Electra and the Old Man raises some implicit metapoetic questions on the challenges of producing 'new' tragic poetry.

The 'New' Recognition Token

Once Aeschylean tokens have been rejected, Euripides proposes a 'new' recognition token—the scar of Orestes. Of course, the scar as recognition token is anything but new, inspired as it is by the recognition of Odysseus by Eurycleia in *Odyssey* 19.[68] Nevertheless, it is not Electra but the Old Man who recognizes the scar of the undisguised Orestes. The contrast between the functions of the two female characters in their respective recognition scenes is striking. Eurycleia's emotional recognition of (the disguised) Odysseus' scar

[65] See Nünlist (1998) 224–7. Macleod (1983) 47–8 argued that the rags and cap of Telephus which fill Dicaeopolis with words in *Acharnians* are metaphors for poetic texts, copies of Euripides' plays.

[66] Wright (2005) 133–57.

[67] In Sophocles, Chrysothemis' correct reading of the visual evidence (i.e. the lock of hair she thinks signals the return of Orestes) is suppressed by the more determined Electra's belief in the false news of Orestes' death, news received before the presence of the lock of hair is made known.

[68] The pattern of Orestes' return is also Odyssean in style. Cropp (1986) discusses the relationship between *Heracles*, *Electra*, and the *Odyssey*. That *Electra* exploits various genres including epic and tragedy is discussed by Goff (2000).

leads to the inscribing of a further story into the narrative—the explanation of how Odysseus got his scar.[69] Where Eurycleia is actively engaged in the recognition process, Electra is a passive bystander to whom Orestes' identity must be explained in lengthy detail to which she remains 'offensively obtuse'.[70] The *Odyssey* is an important source for interpreting this passage but so too, as we shall see, is Aeschylus' *Oresteia*. Let us look first at Euripides' reworking of the Odyssean scar motif. In *Odyssey* 19.428–54, Odysseus, while on a hunt in an inhospitable landscape, is injured in the knee by the tusk of a great wild boar as he approaches the beast's lair. Although injured, he is able to dispatch the beast forthwith and returns to tell his story (*Od.* 19.464–6). In *Electra* 573–4, by contrast, a young Orestes falls while chasing a fawn (*νεβρός*) with his sister and is injured on the eyebrow. Perhaps a fawn is an appropriate object of chase for a child, but Orestes' fall is not caused by an attack from the animal. Rather, it seems, he just falls over (though Electra does not).

The point of the transformation of the Odyssean motif is primarily to cast Orestes as a failed or flawed hero.[71] Odysseus is one of several heroic models against whom Orestes is measured and found wanting. Orestes fails to live up to the Orestes of Aeschylus and Homer,[72] and he is no Achilles.[73] Orestes is like Perseus to some extent but his actions are problematic and both he and his victims are represented by the figure of the Gorgon.[74] It is tempting to add Heracles to this list, given his successful hunt of the Ceryneian hind (Euripides, *Heracles* 375–9 and *Temenidae* fr. 740), which contrasts with Orestes' failed chase of the fawn. Herodotus (4.82) tells us that Heracles was said to have left his footprint on a rock in Scythia. If this were a well-known legend, the footprint of Orestes would once more fail to live up to the heroic model. The footprint of Heracles is three feet long, according to Herodotus, and is the only remarkable thing in

[69] Auerbach (1968) 3–23, esp. 4, argued that the story of how Odysseus got his scar functioned as a release from the tension of Eurycleia's untimely recognition, but this view has been criticized by a number of scholars. See e.g. Clay (1983) 57–8, Cave (1988) 22–4.

[70] Raeburn (2000) 159, nothing (167 n. 33) the contrast between Electra and Eurycleia, who immediately recognizes Odysseus in spite of his disguise.

[71] Goff (1991), Tarkow (1981).

[72] Goldhill (1986) 163–4.

[73] Walsh (1977), cf. King (1980).

[74] O'Brien (1964).

Scythia apart from its large and numerous rivers and vast plains. The imprint on the rock is huge and its provenance is unquestioned (even by Herodotus). In Euripides, by contrast, Electra has refused to believe that a footprint can be made on rocky ground.

The implied comparison to Odysseus has been made through Orestes' scar, but with the *Oresteia* so fresh in our minds it is striking that the scar is said to have been the result of a fall while chasing a *fawn*. In Aeschylus, it is Orestes who is the fawn being hunted by Clytemnestra's avenging Furies. At *Eumenides* 111 Clytemnestra rebukes the Furies saying that Orestes has escaped *νεβροῦ δίκην* 'like a fawn', and later at *Eum.* 246 the Furies say that they are tracking Orestes *τετραυματισμένον γὰρ ὡς κύων νεβρόν* 'as a hound would a wounded fawn'. The story of the scar, then, can be read on a more complex level as a metaphor for the fate of Orestes. The Oresteian image is inverted to suggest that Orestes is the avenger on the hunt. The contrast between Orestes, who falls during the chase, and Electra, who does not, is paralleled in the psychological contrast between the siblings' attitude to the matricide. Orestes is a 'hesitant, frightened man, *burdened* with the task of killing his mother, which he would greatly prefer not to be contemplating'.[75] Electra, on the other hand, displays no hesitation is orchestrating and enacting the matricide. With the story of the fawn, we are not told whether Electra and Orestes capture the object of their chase, though if Orestes falls, it seems likely the fawn escapes pursuit. Clytemnestra, however, will not escape from the siblings.[76] Electra may have been too young to weave when Orestes left (*El.* 541–2), but she *can* weave now, both actually (*El.* 307) and metaphorically. Thus she plots the luring of Clytemnestra to the shack by feigning the birth of a child, in a novel twist which may also have undertones of a metapoetic metaphor. Giving birth is a common metaphor for creation and for poetic (or plot) composition. An extreme example occurs in the *parabasis* of Aristophanes' *Clouds* (530–3) where Aristophanes is presented as a mother who has given birth to a baby/play (his *Banqueters*),[77] but the

[75] Raeburn (2000) 155 (Raeburn's italics).

[76] Scodel (1999) 175, who argues that 'Euripides criticizes Aeschylus even as he defends Homer', does not consider the complexities of Euripides' engagement with Aeschylus through the image of the fawn.

[77] Cf. Ar. *Frogs* 1059, Cratinus fr. 199. On metapoetry and the female body in old comedy, see Hall (2000), revised in Hall (2006) 170–83, and also Sommerstein (2005*b*) on 'art' as a wife or mistress personified in Greek poetry.

metaphorical language of childbearing is also used in tragedy to express poetic creation.[78] The lure Electra conceives is particularly grotesque, since she plays on Clytemnestra's positive maternal instincts in the deceit, confirming the play's message that the *manner* in which Clytemnestra is deceived and killed is deeply problematic.[79]

Framing Recognition and Oresteian Justice

The recognition of Odysseus by his scar was a familiar episode for a fifth-century Athenian audience, not only from Homeric poetry but also from its popularity as a subject for vase paintings.[80] The Aeschylean recognition scene may also have been chosen precisely because of its recognizability, both from earlier performances and from art.[81] Certainly the recognition scene in *Electra* is framed with strong visual reminiscences of the *Oresteia* in performance. Electra's entrance with the water vessel in Euripides 'must recall' the entry of the Aeschylean Electra, also carrying a water vessel, as David Raeburn observes.[82] Hammond has made a convincing case in arguing that both plays featured similar dances with the vessel positioned on Electra's head.[83] Orestes' baggage is another stage prop which echoes Aeschylus' *Libation Bearers*, and Raeburn has argued that it symbolizes, in *Electra*, the psychological burden that Orestes carries from Apollo's oracle to commit matricide.[84] In the latter part of *Electra*, Clytemnestra's entrance on the carriage is 'inescapably a visual reminiscence of Agamemnon's entry' in *Agamemnon*.[85] In that case the visual allusion is strengthened by a textual one. Clytemnestra's command to her Trojan slaves to 'get down from

[78] In Euripides compare *Heracles* 767, *Suppliants* 180–83 (discussed in Ch. 3, pp. 170–1), and *Andromache* 476–7 (discussed in Ch. 4, pp. 191–2).

[79] The fact that epinician language of victory is used to describe the murder of Aegisthus but not that of Clytemnestra is perceptively discussed by Swift (2010) 156–65.

[80] See *LIMC* IV.2 *s.v.* 'Eurykleia', esp. pl. 5, 8, and 9.

[81] The artistic tradition depicting the meeting of Electra and Orestes at the tomb of Agamemnon seems to have been influenced by the popularity of Aeschylus' *Oresteia*. See Prag (1985) 51–7 with pl. 33–6, and cf. Taplin (2007) 49–56.

[82] Raeburn (2000) 151. He notes (152) that the expression of joy in tears at *El.* 126 recalls *LB* 449.

[83] Hammond (1984) 380–1.

[84] Raeburn (2000) 155–6.

[85] Raeburn (2000) 163.

the carriage' (*El.* 998: ἔκβητ' ἀπήνης) echoes Clytemnestra's command to the Trojan captive Cassandra in *Agamemnon* to 'get down from the carriage' (*Ag.* 1039: ἔκβαιν' ἀπήνης).

Clytemnestra's carriage entrance contributes to the play's suggestion of legitimate revenge. Carriage entrances seem to have been a particular feature of Aeschylean drama.[86] In *Agamemnon*, the title character had entered in his carriage in full splendour laden with spoils from the Trojan war, including his concubine Cassandra. He was then lured by Clytemnestra's deceptive speech into the house to his death. In *Electra*, Clytemnestra enters in a carriage in full splendour accompanied by female Trojan slaves. She is then lured by deceptive speech into the shack to her death. Clytemnestra's death in Euripides is the mirror image of her own crime in Aeschylus. The carriage sequence serves to confirm the Justice of *Libation Bearers*, which cries loudly at 309–13 'For a hostile tongue let a hostile tongue be the punishment . . . and for the stroke of blood let the stroke of blood be paid.' In his later *Iphigenia at Aulis*, Euripides would once again exploit the carriage entrance motif, in that case to suggest that Clytemnestra was justified in killing Agamemnon. In *Agamemnon* the title character had arrived in a carriage with a 'bride' (Cassandra) to a space controlled by his spouse (Clytemnestra), expecting a joyous sacrifice of celebration. Instead, he is met with duplicitous speech and learns too late that the sacrifice will be a human one (with himself as victim). In *Iphigenia at Aulis*, the Euripidean 'prequel' to the *Oresteia*, Clytemnestra arrives in a carriage with a 'bride' (Iphigenia) to a space controlled by her spouse (Agamemnon), expecting a joyous sacrifice of celebration. She too is met with duplicitous speech and learns too late that the sacrifice will be a human one (with her daughter as victim). The sequence in Euripides serves to legitimize Clytemnestra's actions as known from Aeschylus' *Agamemnon*. In *Electra*, the murder of Clytemnestra is similarly presented by Euripides in terms of normative tragic ethics when understood through the subtext of Aeschylus' *Oresteia*.[87]

For Hammond, allusions to Aeschylus are 'ridiculous', 'ludicrous'; Euripides' chorus is 'light weight'; the Old Man is 'idiotic' and 'banal';

[86] Taplin (1977) 76 and 452–9.

[87] Similarly, the murder of Aegisthus while conducting a sacrifice means that 'the Aeschylean metaphor of the perverted sacrifice becomes a ritual reality' (Henrichs (1995) 86). Sophocles also appeals to the authority of the *Oresteia* in his presentation of Clytemnestra's death, on which see further Ch. 5, pp. 272–3.

Aeschylus is 'mocked' through 'malicious ridicule'; the invocation scene is 'something of a farce', 'pantomime *in vacuo*'; Euripides is 'openly mocking' and 'jibing' in 'an attack on Aeschylus'; and 'Justice in the Aeschylean sense has no place in the real world of Euripides' *Electra*'.[88] Reading allusions as ridicule and criticism seems to me to be missing the point. Indeed, Hammond is wrong (I think) to claim that Aeschylean Justice has no place in Euripides. The very setting of Euripides' *Electra* at the smoke-soiled shack of the poor but noble farmer seems inspired by the Aeschylean choral passage in which 'Justice shines forth in smoke-soiled dwellings, and honours the righteous man' (*Ag.* 773–5).[89] That attention is drawn to Electra's smoke-soiled dwelling at the moment of the matricide (*El.* 1139–40) suggests that the matricide is legitimate in terms of Aeschylean Justice.[90] Indeed the allusion to Aeschylean Justice is strengthened in visual terms by the *skēnē* itself if it has been painted to represent a peasant's shack with a smoke-soiled doorway, as Hammond suggests.[91] Within *Electra* too the matricide is presented as justified in the Golden Lamb ode,[92] and Castor confirms that Clytemnestra's death was just, although (as we observed above) the way it was effected remains problematic (*El.* 1244).[93]

IPHIGENIA AMONG THE TAURIANS

The persistent problem of redeeming matricide is one to which Euripides returned in his *Iphigenia among the Taurians*, a play

[88] Hammond (1984) 381–6.

[89] In a further actualization of an Aeschylean image, Electra, the metaphorical 'exile' in Aeschylus (cf. *LB* 132, 254, 336) becomes truly exiled from the palace in Euripides, though, as noted by Kubo (1967) 18, there is nothing new in the motif of a child rejected for fear it might cause harm. Ormand (2009) analyses Electra's exile in the context of the effects of Pericles' citizenship legislation on the women of Athens.

[90] Odyssean echoes of the hero's return in disguise to a shack on the outskirts of the city are detected by Davidson (2000) 120–1, though he acknowledges that the intertextual reading should not be pushed too far because of the matricidal dimension.

[91] Hammond (1984) 376, and 378 with n. 15.

[92] Rosivach (1978) esp. 198–9.

[93] Cf. Raeburn (2000) 160 'While justice has undoubtedly been done, the act of revenge has its profoundly disquieting aspects and overtones.' On the grim outlook of Euripides' *Electra* in terms of the divine causes of human misery, see Morwood (1981).

which also positions itself carefully as a response to the *Oresteia*, this time rewriting the conclusion of *Eumenides*.[94] In Aeschylus, the Furies are ultimately appeased by Athena and Orestes is released from their pursuit. In the *IT*, events of *Eumenides* are largely acknowledged, but Athena's appeasement of the Furies is presented as only a partial success. A faction remains unpersuaded and continues to pursue Orestes (*IT* 970–1). The view that the play is a satyric-type or tragicomic sequel to *Eumenides* has been successfully challenged by several scholars, who have shown that the play raises serious issues with significant philosophical and theological implications.[95] Chief among these are broad questions relating to the nature of illusion, reality, and the limits of human knowledge.[96] The theological response to the *Oresteia*, however, is markedly more specific. The drama essentially asks two intertextual questions. What are the logistics of a polluted matricide being hospitably accepted in Athens? How can the Furies be appeased by persuasion alone? Both questions are answered with cult aetiologies.

Religion, Aetiology, and the *Oresteia*

Euripides' *Iphigenia among the Taurians* is extraordinary in providing *three* separate aetiologies, more than in any other extant tragedy. Of the three, two involving Orestes (relating to the *Choes* festival, and the cult at Halai) are clearly related to theological issues in Aeschylus, as discussed below. The third, which prescribes Iphigenia's service to Artemis at Brauron and her ultimate apotheosis (*IT* 1462–7), may also be related to Aeschylus. In the *parodos* of *Agamemnon* (239), Iphigenia sheds the *krokotos* (yellow gown) that she is wearing as she is sacrificed, a garment that is associated with the 'Little Bears'

[94] Goff (1999) esp. 116–19, notes that the *IT* presupposes the failure of the *Oresteia*'s conclusion.

[95] Burnett (1971) 71–2 treats the *IT* as a satyric-type sequel. Verrall (1895) 43–133 uses the term 'tragicomedy' and was followed by many in this regard. Wright (2005) 6–43 gives detailed arguments against using such terms, and demonstrates (*passim*) the serious and often pessimistic nature of the religious and philosophical questions raised in the *IT*. Sansone (1975*a*) 292–3 argued perceptively that the relationship between the *IT* and the *Oresteia* was 'a good deal more serious and significant than Burnett will allow' in that it is an answer to and rejection of the theology of the *Oresteia*. Hartigan (1991) 89–106 also argued that the drama raises serious issues.

[96] Wright (2005).

(*arkteia*) festival performed at Brauron.[97] The fate of Orestes, however, is a more important focus of the *aitia*. Even in the *exodos*, his fate is addressed first by Athena, and his involvement in the aetiology of the *Choes* festival is described extensively in the aftermath of the recognition scene.

The *Choes* 'Pitchers' celebration formed the second day of the Anthesteria festival in honour of Dionysus. This was the most important day in the three-day festival, which involved the consumption of the new year's wine. It was preceded by the *Pithoigia* 'Opening of the wine casks', and followed by the day of the *Chytroi* 'Pots'. The central feature of the *Choes* was the drinking of wine from individual vessels (*IT* 953–4, cf. Ar. *Ach.* 1000–1232), in contrast to the large communal mixing bowls of wine which were the norm at sympotic events.[98] One scholar suggested that Euripides' *Choes* aetiology 'fits poorly with the canonical version of Orestes' arrival in Athens given in Aeschylus' *Eumenides*'.[99] Aside from the fact that tragedy manipulated multiple variants of Greek mythology, Euripides clearly acknowledges events from Aeschylus' *Eumenides* in his *IT*. After committing matricide, Orestes is pursued by the Furies and Apollo sends him to Athens to stand trial with the Furies at the Areopagus court (*IT* 940–6). He takes the platform against the lead Fury and pleads his case. Apollo testifies in his defence, Athena awards him equal votes, and he is acquitted as a result (*IT* 961–7). The Furies, persuaded by Athena's judgment, receive a sanctuary at Athens (*IT* 968–9). This is *precisely* what happens in Aeschylus' *Eumenides*. However, Euripides offers both a proleptic and an elleptic continuation of Aeschylean events.[100] In his proleptic continuation (what came after Aeschylus) a faction of the Furies remain unpersuaded by

[97] Sourvinou-Inwood (2003) 57 n. 64 believed that Brauron was evoked in Aeschylus. Sourvinou-Inwood (1988) remains the most important discussion of the *arkteia*.

[98] The comic portrayal of the festival in *Acharnians* is less sombre and more raucous than the description in Euripides, but this is surely explained by the different genres, *pace* Hamilton (1992) 24, who finds the two treatments to be 'quite at odds' with each other. Another feature common to both comic and tragic accounts is the notion that this drinking festival was open to everyone: women and children (*Acharnians* 1003), but also slaves, and in *IT* this is extended to the polluted Orestes.

[99] Hamilton (1992) 24. Norwood (1953) was even more dismissive of the *Choes aition*, saying of Orestes (252) 'He has forgotten half the facts, and bungles the rest.' The 'facts' meant here are apparently Aeschylus' *Oresteia*.

[100] The terminology is that of Genette (1997) 177.

the trial's verdict and continue to pursue Orestes. In the elleptic continuation (filling a gap), Euripides adds an episode that relates Orestes' reception in Athens and the institutionalization of the *Choes* festival in an aetiological manner.

It is significant that Euripides ignores an Aeschylean aetiology just as he proposes his own. In *Eumenides* the foundation of the Areopagus as a homicide court is occasioned by the trial of Orestes for matricide (cf. *Eum.* 483–4). In Euripides the Areopagus is established by Zeus for Ares because of pollution on his hands (*IT* 945–6, cf. Eur. *El.* 1258–63). By acknowledging Aeschylean events but ignoring their aetiological significance, Euripides prepares the audience for the introduction of his own *aition*. Orestes arrives in Athens but is shunned by his guest-friends because he is detested by the gods (*IT* 947–8). Those who did deign to offer him some hospitality gave him a table on his own apart from the others and each person filled an individual vessel with an equal measure of wine and drank (*IT* 949–54). The description of what Orestes endures is remarkably similar to what the Furies endure in Aeschylus. They are detested by the gods (*IT* 948, *Eum.* 644); they are refused a share at the common table (*IT* 949, *Eum.* 350–1); they are kept apart from others (*IT* 952, *Eum* 386). The parallels underline the internalized nature of the Furies in Euripides, who have become hallucinations (*IT* 281–300; cf. *Orestes*, discussed below). Reminders of the *Oresteia* underline that the new Orestes cannot be separated from his pollution/Furies.[101] Orestes in the *IT* has managed to gain some small level of acceptance from his peers, such as the Furies have from the other gods in *Eumenides*.

The details of Aeschylean events are not only emphasized in the story relating the *Choes* aition, they are also confirmed at the play's exodus. Athena's appearance *ex machina* in the *IT* is somewhat unexpected and creates a further parallel to Aeschylus' *Eumenides* where Athena is such an important figure. In the *IT* we might have expected Artemis to appear *ex machina*, as she does in *Hippolytus*, since she is the most prominent deity in the play. One might have expected Apollo, who appears in the *exodos* of *Orestes*, since he is inextricably bound up with the fate of Orestes.[102] Even in *Ion*

[101] On the Furies as agents of pollution, see R. Parker (1983) 107.

[102] Hartigan (1991) 103 suggests that the audience would have expected 'to see the *mechane* swing into view with Leto's children on it'.

where Athena appears when we should be expecting Apollo, Athena addresses the issue of his absence and acts as his messenger (1555–9). In the *IT*, the most obvious candidates for the entrance *ex machina* are absent, and we receive no apologies for this absence. Athena's presence is relevant, of course, since she will prescribe the foundation of two new cults in her Attic territories, but her presence also serves to remind us of the play's status as a response to Aeschylus. 'I rescued you also before (*καὶ πρίν*), Orestes,' she says, 'when I judged the votes to be equal on the Areopagus' (*IT* 1469–71). When is this *καὶ πρίν* 'also before', if not in Aeschylus' *Oresteia*? Indeed the *IT* concludes with a partial confirmation of the Aeschylean Areopagus *aition*. It may not have been established for Orestes' trial (according to Euripides), but that trial *was* the foundation for acquittal in cases of equal votes in Euripides (*IT* 1471–2; cf. Eur. *El.* 1265–6) as was most likely the case in Aeschylus.[103]

References to the Areopagus trial of Orestes remind us also that Euripides' play is a proleptic continuation of *Eumenides.* Some of the Furies were not persuaded by (or disobeyed: *οὐκ ἐπείσθησαν*) the law and continue to pursue Orestes (*IT* 968–71). We are prompted to ask why, and the answer is obvious. Is it really likely that verbal appeasement would bring to heel spirits who, in the words of Aeschylus, intend to feast on Orestes while he remains alive and has not been slain at any altar (*Eum.* 305)? The *IT* implicitly questions the Aeschylean resolution and suggests an arguably more probable ritual solution. Orestes very nearly does get slain on an altar in the *IT* and a blood-letting ritual is established in order to memorialize his salvation. Orestes is to bring the statue of Artemis to Halai and establish a cult there in her honour. Every year a sword will be held to a man's neck to draw blood, Athena tells Orestes, *τῆς σῆς σφαγῆς ἄποιν'* 'in compensation for your slaughter' (*IT* 1469). The phrase has a double implication. It means 'as compensation to Artemis for your (escape from) slaughter', but could just as well mean 'as compensation for your slaughter', i.e. 'your slaughter of your mother'. The blood-letting ritual is an effective resolution for appeasing the Furies.

[103] *Pace* Seaford (1995). On Athena's vote as the equalizing vote in *Eumenides*, see especially Gagarin (1975) and Sommerstein (1989*a*) *ad* 711–53. Boegehold (1989) argues, with reference to the *IT*, that Athena may have counted and sorted the votes as equal without actually voting herself.

Since they demand blood for blood,[104] the shedding of actual blood even if it is only a symbolic drop seems to be important for purifying Orestes.

Euripides thus responds to Aeschylus' civic and theological resolutions by providing alternate *aitia*. Whether or not Euripidean aetiologies relate to actual contemporary cult or are pure fictions is a matter of some scholarly debate. Scott Scullion argued strongly that Euripidean aetiologies are mostly his own invention.[105] Richard Seaford has rejected Scullion's views, arguing that Euripidean aetiologies were very much rooted in cultic realities.[106] Where Scullion has focused on the tragedian's role as literary creator and therefore as inventor, Seaford has stressed the ubiquitous importance of identifiable cult in Greek society, giving evidence linking tragic aetiology to established cult. There is a middle ground between these two views. Seaford is surely correct in stressing the links between many aetiologies and evidence of cultic reality. However, Scullion also makes an important point in underlining the poet's role as inventor. It seems to me that while Euripidean aetiologies may well allude to known cult practice, they are also communicated and constructed with a particular literary agenda in mind. Indeed, the fact that an aetiology functions as a legitimation of its narrative places aetiologies in an ambiguous and tense position between fiction and reality. Aetiologies are presented as realities, and they can only be successful if the audience recognize their connection with reality. On the other hand, the presentation of such realities creates a natural tension with the drama's implicit claim to being a novel piece of fiction.[107] In the *IT* this tension is complicated by the intertextual engagement with Aeschylus which provides a prefabricated framework for theological considerations.

Recognition, Reversal, and Plot

The marked allusions to the *Oresteia* that we have so far discussed, come, for the most part, after the recognition scene in the *IT*.

[104] Cf. *Ag.* 1430, *LB* 66–7, 312–13, 400–2, *IT* 197, 1223–4. Burkert (1992) 186 n. 8 notes that *φόνῳ φόνον* 'blood for blood' is a formula used also in Soph. *OT* 100, Eur. *Her.* 40, *Or.* 570, 816.

[105] Scullion (2000).

[106] Seaford (2009).

[107] A similar point is made by Dällenbach (1989) 91–3 with regard to novels.

However, already in the prologue of the *IT*, we are led to expect a sustained engagement with the *Oresteia* through a striking textual allusion to the prologue of the *Agamemnon*. Iphigenia concludes the first half of her prologue speech at line 37 with the phrase τὰ δ' ἄλλα σιγῶ 'as for the rest, I am silent'. As noted by Richard Garner in his study of allusion in early Greek poetry, the phrase is an exact quotation from line 36 of the Watchman's prologue speech in *Agamemnon*.[108] This seemingly throwaway line is, in fact, part of the striking metaphor of having an ox on the tongue, preventing the divulging of further information.[109] In the *IT,* it is followed by an expression of fear of the goddess Artemis, but then immediately Iphigenia continues to reveal the actualities of the cult, the very information about which she claimed she would be silent.[110] Euripides at once alludes to Aeschylus and simultaneously indicates that he is embarking on a transverse track. The recognition scene in *IT*, as in *Electra*, is thus framed with allusions to Aeschylus.

The way the recognition is effected alludes once more to the Aeschylean recognition tokens and simultaneously suggests a metapoetic reflection on Euripides' plot structure. The motif of reversal is stressed pointedly through the recognition and beyond, in a plot greatly admired by Aristotle precisely because of these features of recognition and reversal (*Poetics* 1454[a]4–7). Allusions to *Libation Bearers* in the recognition scene of the *IT* are less explicit than those of *Electra*, and the metapoetic reflection on tragic composition is similarly less radical. However, both Euripidean plays are marked in different ways by the *absence* of Aeschylean proofs. Whereas in *Electra* they are rejected, in the *IT* there are no physical proofs whatsoever. Orestes must convince Iphigenia of his identity through his knowledge of relevant family secrets. The verbal proofs in *IT* are (1) reference to a piece of weaving (like Aeschylus), (2) reference to an offering of lustral water sent by Clytemnestra (also a feature in Aeschylus), (3) reference to the cutting of a lock of hair (like Aeschylus), (4) knowledge of the whereabouts of the ancestral spear of Pelops (not in Aeschylus).

[108] Garner (1990) 170.

[109] On the importance of this image, see Fraenkel (1950) ii. 23 with parallels.

[110] It is somewhat of a pattern in *IT* that a character who says they will be silent on an issue subsequently reveals precisely what they claimed they would not; cf. *IT* 505–8, 546–57.

Orestes' first offer of proof is the mention of a cloth Iphigenia had woven illustrating the quarrel between Atreus and Thyestes over the golden lamb and the subsequent shifting of the sun's path in the sky (*IT* 811–17). In Aeschylus, Orestes had produced a piece of cloth woven by his sister Electra with 'a picture of a beast' (*LB* 232: *θήρειον γραφήν*). This basic motif has been appropriated by Euripides to be relevant to family history. The nameless 'beast' (perhaps a lion, cf. *LB* 938) has become the specific 'golden lamb', physical symbol of the authority to rule Argos. Whilst in the possession of Atreus, the golden lamb had been stolen by his brother Thyestes with the help of Atreus' wife Aerope whom Thyestes had seduced. In revenge for the crimes against him, Atreus feigned a truce with his brother inviting him to a banquet at which Thyestes was served the flesh of his own children. In horror at this aberration of nature, the Sun had reversed its path in the sky making day into night. The main elements of the story are referred to in the *parodos* (*IT* 189–202; cf. *El.* 699–736, *Or.* 807–18).

The motifs of shifting and reversal central to the golden lamb episode seem important for understanding the *IT* as a response to Aeschylus. The action has shifted north-eastwards and the protagonists' fates are a reversal of the Aeschylean paradigm (Iphigenia is alive and Orestes was not saved in Athens).[111] Inserting a piece of weaving, a metaphor for poetry, into a poetic text generates the potential for metapoetic reflection, as discussed above. On a metapoetic level the motifs of shifting and reversal incorporated into the weaving reflect the shifting and reversal of events that the mention of weaving will precipitate in its capacity as a recognition proof. Once recognized, Orestes will escape death and Iphigenia will be rescued from her entrapment among barbarians. The weaving stresses payment for the crimes of past generations but it also underlines Iphigenia's skill as a weaver. This anticipates her ability to plot an effective escape plan, a plan which is presented as a *mythos* (cf. *IT* 1049, 1078), here a fiction based on the truth of matricidal pollution. Iphigenia's creation of a *mythos* represents the character's attempt to control her dramatic fiction, just as Electra had attempted to control hers by refusing to acknowledge the obvious significance of the recognition tokens.

[111] In the tragic *Oresteia* trilogy, certainly, there is no indication that Iphigenia has survived. Griffith (2002) 241–6 (followed by Sommerstein (2010) 76–80) has speculated that Iphigenia's salvation may have been revealed in the accompanying satyr-drama *Proteus*.

Electra is disarmed by the Old Man's recognition of Orestes' scar and subsequently conforms to her role as accessory to, and in this case also schemer of, the matricide. Iphigenia's control is undone by divine intervention when Poseidon drives the ship back to land (*IT* 1379; cf. 1415) and she must rely on Orestes to hoist her into the ship (*IT* 1380–4). It is Athena, however, who ties up the loose ends when Iphigenia's scheme becomes unravelled. Athena predicts the new *mythos* (cf. *IT* 1442), with a metaphorical wave of the authorial wand.

Iphigenia's weaving is thus strongly related to the motif of reversal in several ways: through its subject matter depicting the Sun's reversal in the sky, through its precipitation of recognition (and the reversal of the siblings' fortunes), and through its foreshadowing of Iphigenia's creation of a plot whose potential for success is literally reversed when Poseidon drives the ship back to the barbarian land, a plot which can ultimately succeed only through the authorial intervention represented by Athena's predictions. Iphigenia's weaving is known to Orestes 'by hearsay from Electra' (*IT* 811) which serves to remind us of the recognition effected between those two siblings in Aeschylus' *Libation Bearers*. The second and third proofs offered by Orestes in *IT* confirm the allusion. He reminds Iphigenia of the lustral water sent by their mother to Aulis for her marriage and of Iphigenia's dedication of a lock of hair which she sends back to Argos in turn (*IT* 818–20). They were to be a dedication for her tomb rather than for her unmarried body, comments Iphigenia (*IT* 821). In the context of a recognition scene, the dedication of a lock of hair at a tomb recalls Electra's discovery of Orestes' dedicated lock of hair on Agamemnon's tomb at *LB* 168. That discovery had been precipitated by Clytemnestra sending an offering of libations (*LB* 23–4, 87), which included lustral water (*LB* 129). The parallel between the lustral water and lock of hair associated with a tomb in both plays underlines the reversal present in *IT*. Intended as marriage dedications, symbols of a new life, the lustral water and lock of hair become instead tokens for the reverse—Iphigenia's tomb.[112]

The connection drawn between Iphigenia and Clytemnestra serves to contextualize yet another reversal from the Aeschylean

[112] Both lustral water and locks of hair seem to play a role in the human sacrifice rituals over which Iphigenia presides (cf. *IT* 58 for lustral water and *IT* 73 with Torrance (2009*b*) on the locks of hair), thus strengthening the association of these symbols with death.

paradigm. Although apparently in charge of slaughtering Greek men, Iphigenia is revealed as being innocent of the actual killing, unlike the Aeschylean Clytemnestra, so that mother and daughter are implicitly contrasted.[113] The issue had been raised shortly before the recognition scene with a striking textual allusion to *Agamemnon*. Anticipating his imminent death, Orestes asks Iphigenia 'Will you [kill me] yourself *with a sword*, *female sacrificing male*?' (*IT* 621 *αὐτὴ ξίφει θύουσα θῆλυς ἄρσενας*;) Iphigenia's response is firm: *οὔκ* 'No'. Iphigenia simply consecrates the victims while others carry out the actual slaughter.[114] The phrasing strongly recalls *Agamemnon* 1231 where the horrified chorus had described Clytemnestra as *θῆλυς ἄρσενος φονεύς* '*female murderer of the male*' (cf. *ξίφει* '*with a sword*' *Ag.* 1351 and 1529),[115] with Agamemnon's death presented as a 'sacrifice'.[116] The revelation in the build-up to the recognition scene in the *IT* thus functions to reverse the anomaly of female killing male, which had been so significant in *Agamemnon* (cf. *Ag.* 11).

The final proof offered by Orestes in the *IT* recognition sequence, although it does not allude to Aeschylus, nevertheless continues the motif of reversal. It is a piece of knowledge he has by autopsy rather than by hearsay. He has seen the hiding place within the girls' palace apartments of the ancestral spear of Pelops, the spear with which Pelops killed Oenomaus and won his bride Hippodamia in Pisa (*IT* 822–6).[117] The play itself had opened by referring to this event but without mention of any violence. Iphigenia had begun the

[113] Zeitlin (2005) exposes Euripides' renewed emphasis on the mother–daughter relationship and on the motif of birth against the background of the Oresteian supremacy of the male.

[114] Cropp (2000) is surely right to delete *IT* 40–1, which are problematic and unnecessarily reveal that Iphigenia does not sacrifice the victims herself, a fact which is best concealed until 620–4; see further Cropp (2000) *ad* 38–41.

[115] There is some debate as to whether Aeschylus' Clytemnestra wielded an axe or a sword. Those who favour a sword include Fraenkel (1950) *ad* 1529 and appendix B, 806–9, Sommerstein (1989*b*), Prag (1991); those who favour an axe include Burkert (1966) 119–20 and Davies (1987). Marshall (2001) argues that an axe was used in a reperformance, since the murder is described in Euripides' *Electra* and *Hecuba* as having been effected with an axe.

[116] See Zeitlin (1965) and (1966) on the corrupted sacrifice motif in the *Oresteia*.

[117] Reference to the spear of Pelops thus forms a ring composition of proofs as we return to the ancestral violence evoked in the weaving after a focus on Iphigenia's own experiences. Sansone (1975*a*) noted that Pelops also serves as a parallel to Iphigenia in *IT*, as they both escape slaughter at the hands of their respective fathers, and O'Brien (1988) 113 argues that Euripides places the spear in Iphigenia's apartments to emphasize this parallel.

explanation of her genealogy and experiences with Pelops, the son of Tantalus, who went to Pisa with his swift horses and married the daughter of Oenomaus (*IT* 1–2). It is left to the audience to infer how this happened, at least until the spear and murder of Oenomaus are mentioned in the recognition sequence. The violence attached to Pelops' spear (*IT* 823: *λόγχην*) seems to have been neutralized by its 'retirement' to a secret location in the maidens' quarters. It also implies that the maidens are now in control of this male symbol, reflecting the broader pattern of Iphigenia (the maiden) controlling the male characters in the drama (discussed in more detail in Ch. 3, p. 156 n.75). The normative violent associations of the spear are reversed also in the play's *exodos*. About to launch a violent pursuit of the escaped Greek siblings, Thoas accepts Athena's command to stop with the words 'I put away my spear' (*IT* 1484: *παύσω δὲ λόγχην*). The violence of the spear is once again neutralized through association with a maiden (Athena).

Individually, cumulatively, and in the context of their dialogue with Aeschylus, all the recognition proofs in the *IT* emphasize a sense of reversal which reflects, on a metapoetic level, the very structure of the *peripeteia*-driven plot presented to us. The pattern of reversal foreshadows the drama's dénouement in the siblings' release from violence. Orestes will be released from the Furies' pursuit and involved in a mock blood-letting ritual where the grazing of a man's neck will suffice in lieu of a human sacrifice. Iphigenia will cease to preside over a blood-letting cult. It is striking indeed that the drama even seems to predict, metapoetically, the reversal of fortunes precipitated by the recognition scene. Shortly before the siblings recognize each other, Pylades accepts Orestes' request to escape back to Argos with the priestess's letter, leaving Orestes to be the sacrificial victim. After confirming that he will not forsake Electra, Pylades says: 'But the god's prophecy has not yet destroyed you, though you are standing close indeed to death; nevertheless it is true, it is true that extreme ill-fortune at times happens to give way to *extreme reversal*' (*IT* 719–22: *ἀτὰρ τὸ τοῦ θεοῦ σ' οὐ διέφθορέν γέ πω | μάντευμα· καίτοι κἀγγὺς ἕστηκας φόνου. | ἀλλ' ἔστιν, ἔστιν ἡ λίαν δυσπραξία | λίαν διδοῦσα μεταβολάς, ὅταν τύχῃ*). The passage parallels *Libation Bearers* 900–2 where Pylades famously urges Orestes to trust in Apollo's oracle with the startling three lines which break the silence of this otherwise mute character. Euripides *adds* to this the suggestion of a reversal of fortune. In itself the notion is not

uncommon in tragedy.[118] Particularly suggestive in our passage, however, is the use of the term *metabolē* to mean 'reversal' since this is precisely the term used by Aristotle in his *Poetics* to explain both reversal (*peripeteia*) and recognition (*anagnōrisis*) as key features for a successful complex plot (1452ª23, 1452ª31).

In fact, the term *metabolē* is only used by Euripides among the tragedians, and in each case it can be read as reflective of plot construction. Aristotle praised Sophocles' *Oedipus* specifically for the elements of recognition and reversal in its plot structure, where reversal (*peripeteia*) is 'a change (*metabolē*) to the opposite of actions being performed' (*Poetics* 1452ª22–6) of the kind exemplified when a messenger comes to give Oedipus good news about his relationship with his mother but actually triggers the realization of the awful truth. It is noteworthy in this context that Euripides' lost *Oedipus*, which dramatized the same episode as Sophocles' *Oedipus*, twice used the term *metabolē* in passages which were doubtless reflecting on or reflective of Oedipus' fate (frr. 549 and 554).[119] In *Bacchae* Agave's realization that the severed head she holds triumphantly is not that of a lion but that of her own son begins when she sees that the sky is brighter and clearer than before, changes which are called *metabolas* (*Ba.* 1266–7). Here again the term both signals and precipitates an Aristotelian *metabolē* 'reversal' including recognition of the terrible truth. In *Iphigenia at Aulis*, Menelaus draws attention to his radical change of mind concerning the sacrifice of Iphigenia and the abandonment of the expedition by asking Agamemnon 'have I reached a state of reversal (*metabolas*) after a terrible speech?' (*IA* 500). When Iphigenia realizes that she is not in Aulis as the bride of Achilles but as a sacrificial victim, she lets forth 'many exchanges (*pollas metabolas*) of lamentations' (*IA* 1101) indicating a reversal of fortunes from joy to misery.[120] In *Trojan Women*, a play which dramatizes the very

[118] Cf. Cropp (2000) *ad* 721–2 and Kyriakou (2006) *ad* 719–22.

[119] On Euripides' *Oedipus* see Kannicht (2004) 569–83 and Collard and Cropp (2008) viii. 2–27.

[120] Aristotle famously criticized the character of Iphigenia as an example of intolerable inconsistency because she first pleads desperately for her life to be saved and later gives it up willingly (*Poetics* 1454ª 31–3). He might equally well have criticized Menelaus (or Agamemnon) for radical changes of mind. The issue is discussed in detail by Gibert (1995) 203–54, and Morwood (2002) 80 notes that 'shifting currents of human motivation' are reflected in the geographical setting by Euripus, a strait with a famously changeable current.

transition of the Trojan queen and princesses from nobility to slavery against the backdrop of a smouldering Troy, Andromache's remark on the great reversal (*Tro.* 615 *metabolas*) of their fate reflects the central premiss of the drama. In *Heracles*, the chorus celebrate Heracles' return and the murder of the usurper Lycus as a 'reversal (*metabola*) of evils' (*Her.* 735).[121] In Euripides' lost *Auge*, where Heracles discovers, and recognizes as his own, the child borne by Auge (thanks to a ring), a fragment records Heracles playing with the infant (Telephus), and saying 'I always like changes (*metabolas*) from my labours' (fr. 272a) in a scene which must have occurred either before or after the recognition.[122]

The frequency with which Euripides, and only Euripides, uses the term *metabolē* at key moments in the plot to reinforce the new direction the plot has taken suggests that he is inviting audience recognition of the structural elements of his plots. In several cases the term *metabolē* occurs at moments connected to recognition, and the case of *Auge* seems closest in pattern to the *IT*. Certainly the emphasis placed on reversal in the *IT*'s recognition sequence, through allusions to Aeschylus and as a motif of structural and thematic significance, demonstrates that Euripides anticipated Aristotle in being well aware of the power of reversal as a dramatic device. When Iphigenia wonders after the recognition scene what god or mortal or what unexpected event will deliver them (*IT* 895–9), surely this too is a metapoetic invitation to consider the possibility of a divinity arriving *ex machina* to resolve the *mythos* with an authorial power which Iphigenia is not ultimately granted.

ORESTES

In *Orestes*, arguably the most self-conscious and intertextual of all Euripidean plays,[123] Electra seems to allude *both* to the Aeschylean

[121] *Her.* 1291–3, where Heracles says that reversals of fortune (*metabolai*) are painful for the fortunate man, are excised by Diggle (1981), Barlow (1996), and Kovacs (1998).

[122] Collard and Cropp (2008) vii. 261.

[123] See esp. Zeitlin (2003*a*) for an analysis of *Orestes* as a palimpsestic text engaging with numerous sources, and see Fuqua (1976) on *Orestes* as a response to Sophocles' *Philoctetes*.

recognition scene *and* to the plot structure of the drama in an exceptionally loaded statement. As she tends to her ailing and polluted brother, Electra, encourages him to step off his couch by saying 'Would you like me to place your feet on the ground? It has been a long time since you made a footprint. A reversal (*metabolē*), of all things, is sweet.' (*Or.* 233–4: ἦ κἀπὶ γαίας ἁρμόσαι πόδας θέλεις, | χρόνιον ἴχνος θείς; μεταβολὴ πάντων γλυκύ). The reference to Orestes making a footprint is clearly an allusion to both Euripides' *Electra* and to Aeschylus' *Libation Bearers*.[124] Just as Euripides claims to have recreated the 'old' Helen in *Orestes* (129), disregarding the 'new' Helen of his own *Helen*, similarly this new Electra who coaxes Orestes into 'making a footprint' is a far cry from the Electra who rejected his footprint in Euripides' earlier *Electra*. The connection between Orestes' footprint and a reversal implies that this Electra has understood the poetic association between recognition token and reversal, which the earlier character had ignored.[125] On a metapoetic reading, a plot reversal is indeed a pleasing dramatic device (as Aristotle observed, *Poetics* 1452^{a-b}) and overall, the plot structure of *Orestes* can be understood as a *series of reversals* culminating in the survival of the siblings.[126] More specifically, however, the structure of *Orestes* can be read as a series of reversed *Oresteia* plots.

Replotting the *Oresteia*

The plot structure of *Orestes* has regularly been found odd, episodic, or chaotic by critics.[127] Recently, Wright has argued for a thematic unity by reading *Orestes* as an intellectual sequel to *Helen*,[128] but the issue of structural unity remains problematic. In a classic analysis of *Orestes*, Elizabeth Rawson noted in passing that parallels with the *Oresteia* 'control the form' of this Euripidean drama,[129] but the extent to which *Orestes* frames and reframes itself on the model of the

[124] Wright (2008*a*) 121–2.

[125] This Electra, by contrast, does not seem to understand how to deliver a proper prologue speech, however; see Wright (2006*b*) 40.

[126] Burnett (1971) 183–222, Wright (2008*a*) 32–3.

[127] Conacher (1967) 213, Burnett (1971) 184, Schein (1975) 66, Fuqua (1978) 27, Hartigan (1991) 155–6, Kovacs (2002*b*) 277, Reinhardt (2003) 32–46, Zeitlin (2003*a*) 318–19.

[128] Wright (2006*b*).

[129] Rawson (1972) 156.

Oresteia's plot structure has not been fully explored. Caldwell argued that *Iphigenia among the Taurians* recreates the general plot structure of the *Oresteia* in a basic linear fashion.[130] Euripides' *Orestes*, however, reveals a complex multiplicity of structural variations and reversals of the *Oresteia*. The play models itself first as a response to *Eumenides* in its opening scenes, in a dialogue which remains open over the course of the entire play. References to *Eumenides* are planted throughout and into the drama's conclusion, as anchors to remind us that *Orestes* is ultimately a rival to *Eumenides* in mythopoetic terms. Second, the *Libation Bearers* story is reworked in triplicate: replayed, reversed, and finally re-enacted. Third, we are presented with an *Agamemnon* remake, which culminates the overall scheme of *Orestes* as an *Oresteia* in reverse. Finally, the play's *exodos* replays an *Oresteia* in miniature. The overall effect of this layering and interweaving of multiple Oresteian plots suggests an inescapability from certain creative constraints. Euripides revisits the *Oresteia* on the fiftieth anniversary of its first production and produces an intricate web-like structure of *Oresteia* remakes.

The Scaffold of *Eumenides*, Theology, and Politics

In the opening scene of *Orestes*, the title character sleeps on a couch while Electra speaks the prologue at his side. He is frothing from the mouth and eyes, his hair is matted with filth and he is unwashed since the murder and so presumably blood-stained (*Or.* 219–20, 223–6, cf. 39–42). After a brief exchange with Electra, he has a hallucinatory fit in which he sees his mother threatening him with her Furies (*Or.* 255–6). Electra tends to him with the words οὔτοι μεθήσω· 'I will not leave you alone!' (*Or.* 262) to which Orestes responds μέθες· μὶ' οὖσα τῶν ἐμῶν Ερινύων 'Leave me alone! You are one of my Erinyes', imagining that Electra is one of the Furies (*Or.* 264–5).[131] The whole sequence involves some striking transformations of the opening of *Eumenides*. There Orestes appears as a suppliant to Apollo, with his hands dripping blood (cf. *Eum.* 41–2), surrounded by visible Furies asleep on chairs (cf. *Eum.* 46–9).[132] Apollo's first words give Orestes

[130] Caldwell (1975).

[131] This reverses events of *IT* 798–9 where Orestes attempts to embrace his sister Iphigenia and is rejected.

[132] Most scholars since the scholiast have taken it for granted that the interior scene of the Pythian temple was revealed through the *ekkyklēma* on which both Orestes and the Furies appeared. Taplin (1977) 365–74 argues that the chorus do

an important assurance: οὔτοι προδώσω· 'I will not betray you!' (*Eum.* 64) followed by an elaborate description of what Orestes must do to gain purification. Apollo thus confirms Orestes' hope at *Libation Bearers* 269–70 where he had expressed his faith in the god with the words: οὔτοι προδώσει Λοξίου μεγασθενὴς | χρησμός 'The mighty oracle of Loxias *will not betray me*.' These visual and linguistic intertextual markers announce a clear engagement with the *Oresteia* from the opening scenes and emphasize the separation of the divine and the human in Euripides' new theological outlook. Orestes now relies on his sister rather than on Apollo. In *Eumenides*, Apollo gives Orestes a head-start on his journey to Athens while the Furies sleep. It is only after Orestes' exit that Clytemnestra's ghost appears to urge the Furies on to catch him. In *Orestes* Clytemnestra's ghost has already appeared to Orestes, urging her Furies on him, *before* Electra's expression of assurance. This underlines Euripides' focus on the lack of divine support for the siblings and on the absence of Apollo, who is blamed repeatedly for the matricide throughout this drama.[133]

It seems possible also that the identification of the *skēnē* as the palace of Agamemnon may not be immediately apparent and may be suppressed until the city of Argos is mentioned at *Orestes* 46, when the dramatic location for the play becomes clear. West has noted that we are given no explanation for why a couch has been brought out from the palace for Orestes, in contrast to other Euripidean plays.[134] In *Hippolytus*, specific reasons are given for doing so (*Hipp.* 170), while in *Medea* the interior space of the palace associated with the bed (*Med.* 24, 141, 152) is clearly delineated from exterior space (cf. *Med.* 214). An audience faced with a prostrate, subdued, and polluted Orestes might well assume the dramatic location to be the Pythian temple at Delphi. Vase-paintings thought to depict scenes related to ancient drama show remarkably little distinction in representing palace and temple buildings, both of which are shown as columned buildings with a frontal architrave and pediment and a pair of central

not appear until 140ff. Even if this is the case the common elements between the two scenes are nonetheless noteworthy.

[133] On Apollo in *Orestes* see Willink (1986) xxxvii, *ad* 28f., and *ad* 75–6; even Orestes' bow, a divine gift of Apollo, which Orestes is meant to use against the Furies (*Or.* 268–70) is ineffectual in calming his hallucinations and may have been itself an hallucination, on which see Willink (1986) *ad* 268–74 and Cropp (1982), though Kovacs (2002*b*) argues that the bow was a physical presence on stage.

[134] West (1987) 178–9.

doors. It is only through additional details that we can tell whether a scene is linked to a temple or to a palace setting.[135] The argument cannot ultimately be proved, of course, but given the presence of a prostrate and polluted Orestes in the opening scene it seems possible, at least, that an audience might be surprised to learn that the location is actually Argos and the palace of Agamemnon. It is true that Electra identifies herself at *Orestes* 24, but Euripides had presented her as evicted from the palace in his earlier *Electra* so an ambiguity of location might well be sustained in spite of this. Indeed the prologue of *Electra* itself created suspense in drawing out the speech for over thirty lines before the identity of the speaker and the location of the action were explained.[136]

Whatever conclusions we draw concerning the possible visual performance echoes of the opening scenes of *Orestes*, the verbal allusions to *Eumenides* serve to emphasize the new theological explorations of Euripides' play where humans must seemingly cope on their own, but are unable to act appropriately without divine guidance.[137] Apollo's absence is perhaps nowhere more potently brought to light than in another intertextual allusion to *Eumenides*, when Orestes appropriates the biological arguments of the Aeschylean Apollo in his supplication of Tyndareus. The father, claims Orestes, is the true parent of the child as the planter of the seed, while the mother is simply the vessel. Therefore it was right for him to avenge his father by killing his mother (*Or.* 552–6). In *Eumenides*, Apollo uses this argument to support Orestes at his trial, claiming Athena as evidence of its truth, since she was traditionally born from Zeus (*Eum.* 658–66). In the mouth of Orestes, however, the argument fails to convince Tyndareus, and Orestes must face his human peers in the offstage trial that rewrites the matricide trial of *Eumenides* (for the first time). The trial for murder by the citizens only (*Or.* 756) once more stresses the absence of divine intervention in *Orestes*, that is, until the surprising *ex machina*

[135] Compare the images at Taplin (2007) 150–1, 154–5 (temple related to *IT*), 202 (palace related to *Sthen.*), 228, 264 (palaces related to unidentifiable tragedies).

[136] Hartigan (1991) 108 n. 6 notes that this is 'the longest delay before identification of any extant Euripidean play' with Electra in *Orestes* coming in second.

[137] The siblings act inappropriately by attending Clytemnestra's funeral and failing to leave the city; see Kovacs (2002*b*) 281–3. Greenberg (1962) 162 noted that Clytemnestra's murder (which Orestes regrets) had been divinely prescribed, while the new plot to murder Helen is a purely mortal scheme.

appearance of Apollo. The arrival of Apollo itself represents the fulfilment of Orestes' earlier wish that 'some unexpected salvation (*aelptos sōtēria*) might fall down from somewhere' (*Or.* 1173). When the divine voice is introduced, Aeschylean events are not only confirmed, but divine involvement takes over completely. Apollo predicts the trial of Orestes on the Areopagus in Athens, but he will be judged by gods only and acquitted (*Or.* 1648–52). Where *Eumenides* had created an aetiology for the foundation of the Athenian homicide court, judged by Athenians with Athena casting the final vote, *Orestes* refers judgment on matricide exclusively to the gods. Euripides thus scrutinizes the theological implications of a further Aeschylean resolution. In the *IT* he had raised the question of how the Furies could be appeased without receiving blood for blood. In *Orestes* Euripides questions the concept of gods and mortals working in tandem in a court of law. It seems noteworthy in this context that Euripides consistently places the foundation of the Areopagus with the murder of Halirrhothius by Ares in his other House of Atreus plays (cf. *IT* 945–6, *El.* 1258–63). The Areopagus court in Euripides is an entirely divine affair. Taking legal and political decisions out of the hands of mortals is the only solution proposed in *Orestes* for resolving factious political turmoil.[138]

Libation Bearers Replayed, Reversed, Re-enacted

While evoking *Eumenides*, the opening scenes of *Orestes* also introduce the first sequences in a set of three reworkings of the *Libation Bearers* plot. The first is replayed with different characters and prematurely abandoned. The second reminds the audience of the original *Libation Bearers* sequence in reverse order. The third re-enacts the traditional plot with a combination of old and new characters. The first replay is set in motion when Helen appears and asks Electra to bring offerings of a lock of hair and a libation to Clytemnestra's tomb on her behalf (*Or.* 94–6). It has been well observed that Helen here functions as a doublet of the Aeschylean

[138] Many scholars have shown how the presentation of political factions in this tragedy reflects the political unrest of late 5th-cent. Athens. See e.g. Rawson (1972) 157–62, Euben (1986), Wolff (1983) 353, Hall (1993), Wright (2008*a*) 101–6; Porter (1994) 327–32 doubts the connections between *Orestes* and Thucydides' discussion of the political strife in Corcyra, but is forced to acknowledge the many similarities.

Clytemnestra who sends Electra to Agamemnon's tomb with the same grave offerings.[139] In *Orestes*, Electra refuses but suggests another doublet, Helen's own daughter Hermione whom Clytemnestra had raised in Helen's absence (*Or.* 64). It is after Hermione has been dispatched to the tomb that Electra asks Orestes to make a footprint (*Or.* 233–4), reminding us of the *Libation Bearers* recognition scene, as discussed above. Electra's control over the *Libation Bearers* remake is evident from her refusal to replay her own original role of carrying grave offerings to a tomb. The potential for a reversal of fortune is promptly instantiated by the arrival of Menelaus. Orestes exclaims that Menelaus comes 'as a light' (*φῶς*) in the midst of their troubles (*Or.* 243). Light is a common enough image of salvation in Greek poetry, but the immediate context in which *Libation Bearers* looms so large evokes the Aeschylean Orestes who is imagined returning as a 'light' (*φῶς*) for the house (*LB* 131). The recasting is complete: Helen as Clytemnestra, Hermione as Electra, Menelaus as Orestes. But Menelaus is unwilling to play his new role and essentially refuses to help the siblings, and so the first *Libation Bearers* plot is aborted.

The second sequence reminds us of the original *Libation Bearers* plot in reverse order. Orestes is designated as 'the matricidal snake' by Tyndareus on his arrival (*Or.* 479 *ὁ μητροφόντης . . . δράκων*), in an allusion to the image of Orestes in *Libation Bearers* as the 'snake' offspring of Clytemnestra (*LB* 527: *δράκοντ'*) who draws blood from her breast when she suckles it (*LB* 533). The image is appropriated by Orestes there with the words 'I become the snake and kill her' (*LB* 549–50: *ἐκδρακοντωθεὶς δ' ἐγώ | κτείνω νιν*). Realizing that her death is imminent, Clytemnestra (in *Libation Bearers*) bares her breast to Orestes, hoping to save her life in a desperate appeal to their bond as mother and child. The gesture disturbs Orestes, but he overcomes his hesitation with the support of Pylades (*LB* 896–902).[140] In *Orestes*, Orestes never answers Tyndareus' question (*Or.* 526–8): 'What feeling came over you, you wretch, when your mother exposed her breast as she beseeched you?' This lack of response allows the audience to imagine the scene based on external (or intertextual) knowledge, especially since Orestes acknowledges obliquely that the event took place (*Or.* 568). It is only after Orestes attempts and fails to gain favour

[139] Zeitlin (2003*a*) 311.

[140] A similar scene is reported in Euripides' *Electra* (1206–23) where Orestes overcomes his hesitation by shielding his gaze.

with Tyndareus and Menelaus that Pylades enters the stage as an ally. Now Orestes requests that Pylades guide him to Agamemnon's tomb so that he can appeal to his father (*Or.* 795–7). The sequence of events in the *Libation Bearers* plot has been reversed. The matricidal snake who dared to kill his mother as she bared her breast returns to the tomb of his father with Pylades, the very actions which *prefigured* the arrival of Orestes and his murder of Clytemnestra in Aeschylus.

The return to Agamemnon's tomb at once forms the conclusion of the *Libation Bearers* story in reverse and the starting point for the re-enactment of the new version. The exit of Orestes and Pylades is followed by a choral ode which rehashes the family woes from the quarrel over the golden lamb to the matricide which Orestes dared to commit in the face of his mother's bare breast (*Or.* 827–42). The plot refuses to be subdued and the re-enactment of the new *Libation Bearers* gets under way when Orestes, Pylades, and Electra are re-united and arrive at a plan. Since they are to be put to death, they might as well achieve something before they die by getting rid of Helen (*Or.* 1131–52). Faced with death the trio have nothing to lose in planning additional murders.[141] Orestes and Pylades will enter the palace pretending that they are going to commit suicide (*Or.* 1119). It is anticipated that Helen will cry outwardly but will be inwardly rejoicing (*Or.* 1122). The assumption that Helen will rejoice at their deaths is not entirely justified.[142] It may seem odd in the immediate context of the play, but in a re-enactment of *Libation Bearers* the assumption clearly casts Helen as a new Clytemnestra. This is precisely how the Aeschylean Clytemnestra responds to the news of Orestes' death: as the Nurse reports, she is sorrowful in front of the servants but is actually concealing her joy (*LB* 737–8). The plan is followed by an appeal to Agamemnon (*Or.* 1225–45) which recalls the appeal to Agamemnon before the murder in *Libation Bearers* (479–509),[143] and also in Euripides' *Electra* (671–84). But the

[141] Compare prisoners serving life sentences in jail who perceive that they have nothing to lose by continuing to commit murder while incarcerated, an issue which has been exploited by right-wing activists to support the death penalty as discussed by e.g. Bedau (1997).

[142] West (1987) *ad* 1122. Various scholars have found Helen sympathetic in contrast to those who scheme her death, e.g. Willink (1986) *ad* 71–125, Wright (2006*b*) 42.

[143] For Reinhardt (2003) [1960] 42 'The echoes are too marked to be missed'; cf. also Davies (1998) 397.

Libation Bearers story has now become entwined with a recasting of Aeschylus' *Agamemnon*. The anticipated dissembling of Helen also recalls the Clytemnestra of *Agamemnon* (*Ag.* 1372 ff.),[144] and there are several specific allusions to *Agamemnon* in the final part of *Orestes* which conclude a further strand of plot manipulation, casting *Orestes* as an *Oresteia* in reverse.

First Things Last: Recasting *Agamemnon*

Pylades has planned the murder of Helen, but before he and Orestes put their plan into action, Electra suggests an insurance policy for salvation after the murder. Orestes and Pylades must take Hermione hostage and make as if to slit her throat in order to stave off retribution from Menelaus for Helen's death (*Or.* 1189–1202). Orestes, impressed by the plan, congratulates Electra with the words: 'You have acquired the mind of a man though in form you are outstanding among the female sex' (*Or.* 1204–5: *ὦ τὰς φρένας μὲν ἄρσενας κεκτημένη, | τὸ σῶμα δ' ἐν γυναιξὶ θηλείαις πρέπον*). Orestes then congratulates Pylades on being able to share his marriage bed with such a wife should he survive (*Or.* 1207–8). The implications of this outburst are deeply ironic when read against *Agamemnon*. It had been Clytemnestra, of course, who was infamously introduced as having the heart of a woman which plans like a man in the prologue (*Ag.* 11) and this passage of *Orestes* serves as an intertextual marker for the engagement with *Agamemnon* in the last third of the play. Clytemnestra's masculine planning entailed the slaughter of her husband, so the suggestion that Pylades is lucky to wed such a woman reverses the Aeschylean paradigm. Orestes had addressed Electra pointedly in the opening scenes asking her to be different from the evil daughters of Tyndareus, and encouraging her not just to say so but to actually mean it (*Or.* 251–2). Now Orestes unwittingly congratulates her for becoming an Aeschylean Clytemnestra. He seems as oblivious to his role in engaging with the *Oresteia* as he is passive in the planning stages of the murder.[145] Electra never replies to this but

[144] Cf. Burnett (1971) 210.

[145] This is in marked contrast to Orestes' metamythological awareness of his role as a model for Telemachus in the *Odyssey*, a paradigm which is reversed by Orestes appropriating Telemachus as a model against whom he should be judged (*Or.* 588–90, Zeitlin (2003*a*) 325, Davidson (2000) 118–19).

the very lack of internal response within the drama creates a vacuum in which the audience is invited to consider the issue. In *Iphigenia among the Taurians*, as we have seen, the question of whether the daughter is like the mother was also implicitly raised.

In a further layer of irony, it is clear that Electra's plan does not mirror Clytemnestra's crime so much as it mirrors Agamemnon's sacrifice of the maiden Iphigenia.[146] It is an important departure from the Iphigenia paradigm, however, that Electra does not suggest actually going through with the murder of Hermione (unless the trio feel compelled to resort to setting the palace on fire). The potential survival of Hermione foreshadows the dissipation of the entire murder plot. Nevertheless the engagement with *Agamemnon* is reinforced when Electra involves the unwitting Hermione in the murder plot without her knowledge by explaining that they have been placed 'in the yoke of necessity' (*Or.* 1330: *ἀνάγκης δ' ἐς ζυγόν*). This was, of course, the image used to explain Agamemnon's sacrifice of Iphigenia in Aeschylus (*Ag.* 218: *ἀνάγκας ἔδυ λέπαδνον*), in a play where the yoke was an important recurring motif associated throughout with enforced subjugation (cf. *Ag.* 953, 1071, 1226, 1618). So the events described in *Agamemnon* are replayed with a different cast.

Imagery of lions and nets recalls both *Agamemnon* and *Libation Bearers*. Zeus in *Agamemnon* had cast a 'net' over Troy (*Ag.* 358: *δίκτυον*) and the Greek army had leapt over Troy's battlements as a 'flesh-eating lion' (*Ag.* 827: *ὠμηστὴς λέων*). Orestes in *Libation Bearers* had recognized the robe used to kill Agamemnon as a 'net' (*LB* 999: *δίκτυον*), while he and Pylades were 'a twofold lion' (*LB* 938: *διπλοῦς λέων*). Now in *Orestes* Hermione walks into the 'nets' of the siblings (*Or.* 1315: *δικτύων*) while Orestes and Pylades are the 'twin Greek lions' who attack Helen in the palace (*Or.* 1401–2: *λέοντες | Ἕλλανες δύο διδύμω*; cf. *Or.* 1555). Where Clytemnestra had caught Agamemnon in her 'nets' (*Ag.* 1375: *ἀρκύσταt'* cf. *LB* 1000: *ἄρκυν*), the Phrygians fear that Helen has been caught in the 'nets' of the matricidal snake (*Or.* 1421: *ἀρκυστάτων*). The echoes of these weighty and gruesome crimes contribute to the sense that events are spiralling out of control in this remarkable Euripidean play.

[146] Cf. Zeitlin (2003*a*) 339.

Oppressive events are punctuated in *Orestes* by stimulating theatrical spectacle.[147] One such spectacle is the performance by the Phrygian slave whose role can be read against that of the Phrygian captive Cassandra in *Agamemnon*, as a 'reverse doublet of the Trojan princess'.[148] The figure of Cassandra has several important functions in Aeschylus. She frustrates Clytemnestra's control of the central doorway by refusing to respond when Clytemnestra tries to coax her into the house, leading Clytemnestra to wonder whether she is able to understand Greek (*Ag.* 1050–2, cf. 1062–3).[149] We soon learn, after Clytemnestra's departure, that she has perfect tragic Greek through which she communicates her visions of past, present, and future crimes in the Atreid house, the first lengthy part of which is expressed in lyric song. Her prophetic description of the imminent murder of Agamemnon means that there is no need for a messenger speech. She walks calmly into the palace to her death once she has completed her prophecies. The Phrygian slave in *Orestes* essentially does the reverse. He comes out of the palace hysterical, but his heightened emotional state means that his report of the attempted murder is also communicated in lyric song, and he too fulfils the function of a messenger.[150] In contrast to Cassandra who bears little evidence of her foreign identity, the Phrygian in *Orestes* repeatedly draws attention to his Asiatic or 'barbarian' characteristics, including his shoes, his cries, his voice, his fanning of Helen, his *proskynesis* (*Or.* 1370, 1385, 1395–7, 1426, 1507).[151] This outrageous distortion of the conventional tragic Trojan, normally dignified and sympathetic,[152] sets the stage for the final distorted *Oresteia* plot, this time re-enacted in miniature.

[147] Wolff (1983) 356 calls the finale a 'façade of theatrical virtuosity'.

[148] Zeitlin (2003*a*) 321.

[149] On Clytemnestra's control of the doorway see Taplin (1978) 33–5.

[150] Porter (1994) 173–213 emphasizes the normative aspects of the Phrygian scene as a messenger scene, but Wright (2008*b*) has argued that the Phrygian entered on the *mēchanē*, a visual effect which would have compounded the outlandishness of the performance.

[151] On the oriental features of the Phrygian slave see Hall (1989) 73–4, 110, 119, 157–8. The scene between Orestes and the Phrygian also serves as a recapitulation of the play itself where the Phrygian is a distorted version of Orestes, on which see Wolff (1983) 344–5, 349.

[152] Hall (1989) 211–23 discusses the integrity of tragic Trojan characters in her analysis of noble barbarians in tragedy.

The Finale: An *Oresteia* in Miniature

The final act of *Orestes* opens with the entrance of Menelaus attended by an armed guard. On arrival he is faced with the threat of his daughter's murder by Orestes, who appears on the roof holding Hermione hostage, accompanied by Pylades who holds flaming torches ready to set the palace ablaze. The ensemble is a bizarre remake of the Aulis story as told in the *parodos* of *Agamemnon*. We have a Greek armed force, led by an Atreid who is forced to face the murder of his daughter, referred to sarcastically in *Orestes* as a pre-battle sacrifice (*Or.* 1604). Indeed, Orestes had earlier alluded to the fact that the death of Hermione would have been recompense for the slaughter of Iphigenia at Aulis (*Or.* 658–9; cf. *IA* 1201–2 where Clytemnestra argues that Hermione should die instead of Iphigenia). Where Agamemnon had agreed to sacrifice his daughter, Menelaus now comes to his daughter's rescue, prefiguring the 'death-averted' resolution of the drama. The appearance of the figures on the roof in *Orestes* is unexpected,[153] and may recall the opening of *Agamemnon* where the Watchman is positioned on the roof looking out for the torch-fires that signal Troy's destruction. The hand-held torch-fires on the roof may function as a grim inversion of the torches of ritual celebration in the *Oresteia*'s final scene.[154]

Shocked by the scene on the roof, Menelaus asks Pylades if he too is taking part in this murder (*Or.* 1591). Orestes answers on his behalf saying 'He says so silently; my words will suffice' (*Or.* 1592: *φησὶν σιωπῶν· ἀρκέσω δ' ἐγὼ λέγων*). This is clearly an allusion to *Libation Bearers*. There Pylades had been a mute character until Orestes' hesitation at the moment of the murder, when he unexpectedly encourages Orestes (*LB* 900–2). Euripides has reversed that pattern by giving Pylades an important role in the planning but making him mute on-stage at the moment of imminent murder.[155] The situation is diffused and resolved by the appearance of Apollo and Helen *ex machina* and through Apollo's prescriptions for the future of the characters. Orestes will stand trial for matricide at the Areopagus homicide court (*Or.* 1648–52) and Apollo takes responsibility for

[153] Audience attention is focused on the palace doors (cf. *Or.* 1561–2) when Orestes and Pylades appear on the roof with Hermione held at knife-point.

[154] Rawson (1972) 155, Wolff (1983) 341, Hall (1993) 281; see also Rawson (1972) 164–5 and Schein (1975) 63 on the sinister associations of fire in *Orestes*.

[155] Davies (1999) discusses this allusion in more detail, calling the Euripidean scene the 'mirror-image' of the famous Aeschylean one.

ordering the matricide (*Or.* 1665). So the drama ends with a final reference to *Eumenides*. The miniature replay of the *Oresteia* in the final act of *Orestes* is complete. The Phrygian slave may have cried 'Woe! Woe!' (*Or.* 1395: αἴλινον αἴλινον) but, as Orestes exclaims in the *exodos* 'It is turning out well (*eu*)!' (*Or.* 1670: ἀλλ' εὖ τελεῖται). The prayer refrain from the *parodos* of *Agamemnon* 'Cry woe! woe! But may good (*eu*) prevail' (*Ag.* 121, 138, 159: αἴλινον αἴλινον εἰπέ, τὸ δ' εὖ νικάτω; cf. *Ag.* 217 εὖ γὰρ εἴη) has been fulfilled in an intertextual way.

Transforming Corporeality: Imagination and Visualization

In the *Oresteia*, the physical presence of torchlight in the final play of the trilogy functions as part of a broader pattern in which metaphors explored in the first and second plays become materially visible in the final play. The shift towards concretization reinforces the trilogy's positive resolution, and helps to highlight the real Athenian institutions which are evoked (homicide trials on the Areopagus, the metic status of resident aliens in Athens). Perverted light imagery in *Agamemnon*, which signals doom, becomes ambivalent in *Libation Bearers*, where Orestes is a light for the house (*LB* 131) but brings the ruin of matricide (*LB* 1076). Light is restored to an auspicious context through its material presence in the torchlit procession at the trilogy's close. The negative power of the metaphorical snake (*Ag.* 1233, *LB* 249, 994, 1047) gains material embodiment in the hair of the Furies in the final play and is neutralized through their incorporation into Athenian society and their power to bless the land. So also the colour red, associated with blood and murder in the first two plays, is positively embodied in the metic robes worn by the newly integrated Eumenides in the final play's closing procession (*Eum.* 1028–9). The trial scene staged in *Eumenides* can be read as the physical manifestation of a redefined system of justice, which no longer relies on the endless and cyclical vendetta system imaged in judicial terms, especially in the first play (e.g. *Ag.* 41, 534–7, 813–16). Even the motif of dreaming, which affects Clytemnestra in *Agamemnon* (274–5) and *Libation Bearers* (32–41, 523–53), is given a corporeal dimension in *Eumenides* when her ghost appears on stage as the dream of the sleeping Furies.[156]

[156] On the complex patterns of language and imagery in the *Oresteia*, see especially Lebeck (1971).

In his *Electra*, Euripides had replicated this Aeschylean paradigm in an intertextual manner, making the abstract image of Justice abiding in a smoky hovel (from *Agamemnon*) a physical reality in his *skēnē*, as discussed above. In *Orestes*, Euripides does the reverse. The bloody-eyed, snake-like Furies and Clytemnestra's ghost are internalized as Orestes' private hallucinations (255–6), no longer visible to the audience.[157] If physicality in *Eumenides* reinforces the message of salvation through Athenian institutions, abstraction in *Orestes* suggests the reverse, where human institutions fail to resolve political stasis. The physical absence of the Furies and Clytemnestra's ghost is stressed when Electra says to Orestes: 'you see nothing of the things *you imagine* you recognize clearly' (*Or.* 259: *ὁρᾷς γὰρ οὐδὲν ὧν δοκεῖς σάφ' εἰδέναι*). Orestes later admits 'I *imagined* that I saw three maidens like night' (*Or.* 408: *ἔδοξ' ἰδεῖν τρεῖς νυκτὶ προσφερεῖς κόρας*). Language of imagination is very often loaded in Euripides to raise philosophical questions about the relationship between illusion and reality. How can we tell reality from illusion? Matthew Wright has argued persuasively that Euripides draws attention to the fictionality of myth by making his characters question their own mythical histories, implying that the truth is ultimately impossible to pin down.[158] The case of the absent Furies, however, functions more on a metatheatrical than a metamythological level, since the concept of illusion as *preferable to* reality has been baldly expressed by Orestes. He has agreed to get off his couch (and make a footprint) 'since this has the *illusion* of health, and *illusion* is more powerful even if it is at some distance from the truth' (*Or.* 235–6: *δόξαν γὰρ τόδ' ὑγιείας ἔχει· | κρεῖσσον δὲ τὸ δοκεῖν, κἂν ἀληθείας ἀπῇ*). The entire theatrical process is, of course, an elaborate illusion, and *Orestes* as a drama raises multiple questions concerning the relationship between illusion and reality, only to leave them unanswered.[159]

Nevertheless, if Orestes is characterized by *synesis*, an uncommon Greek word meaning 'comprehension', which he uses to describe his

[157] In the *IT*, the presence of the Furies and Clytemnestra's ghost is at a double remove from the audience, as hallucinations reported after occurring in off-stage space.

[158] Wright (2005).

[159] On the theme of illusion in *Orestes* see Schein (1975), Wolff (1983) 346, Wright (2006*b*).

consciousness of his terrible crimes (*Or.* 395–6),[160] then perhaps he has also been given the kind of self-conscious metapoetic insight we have seen in other Euripidean characters. Reading Orestes' comment on the power of illusion in the context of this scene's intertextuality with Aeschylus suggests a tension between a physical dramatic representation of the Furies, and purely descriptive visual evocation for the audience. Orestes does not *see* physically what he thinks he sees (cf. ὁρᾷς, *Or.* 259), but the audience can easily imagine metaphorically what he describes. Whether or not the audience had seen a reperformance of *Eumenides*, they would have, in all likelihood, been familiar with imagery of Orestes hounded by the newly anthropomorphic Furies of Aeschylus, which became popular as vase paintings in the decades after the original production of the *Oresteia*.[161] This may well be the case also of the famous scene in which Clytemnestra bares her breast.[162] Tyndareus stresses that he *did not see* the awful scene though his eye wastes away with tears (*Or.* 528–9). The point, which will be developed in detail in Chapter 2, is that Euripides actively stimulated in his audience visual associations with contemporary artistic media (painting, sculpture, architecture) in addition to other tragic performances. Where he seeks to destabilize the concrete resolutions of Aeschylus' *Oresteia*, then, it makes compositional sense to abstract the Aeschylean Furies into the mind's eye of his characters and his audience. Euripides then draws attention to the visual physicality of his own *newly* constructed scenes through language of vision and spectacle. Electra watches the *eisodoi* keenly so that she will see Menelaus' approach (*Or.* 67–8). It is Helen, however, who appears unexpectedly and unannounced from inside the palace. 'Why should

[160] On *synesis* in *Orestes* see Assael (1996), Porter (1994) 298–313 (who feels that most scholars overstate the insanity of Orestes), and the overview of Wright (2008*a*) 56–7.

[161] Prag (1985) 48–51, with plates 30–3, Knoepfler (1993) figs. 61–5, and see Taplin (2007) 58–66 on 4th-cent. vase paintings depicting Orestes' pursuit by the Furies.

[162] Prag (1985) 40, with plate 27, discusses the depiction of a matricide on a mid-5th-cent. vase painting, with a young man in travelling gear advancing threateningly against a woman who supplicates him and displays her bare left breast. Prag also discusses (at 40–1, with plate 28c) a silver seal depicting another impending matricide complete with young man armed with a dagger and a lavishly adorned woman whose right breast has been left bare. This time the scene can be identified for certain through the inscribed names of Clytemnestra and Orestes. Taplin (2007) 56–7 discusses a 4th-cent. vase painting depicting this scene.

I tell you about what you see (ὁρᾷς) in your own presence?' Electra asks Helen (*Or.* 81), but then explains exactly what Helen is seeing, and what Electra has already described (*Or.* 34–45), namely that she is keeping vigil over the diseased Orestes (*Or.* 83–5), so that we have multiple referents for the visual impact of this scene. On Helen's exit and before the entry of the chorus, Electra asks 'Did you all see (*eidete*) how she cut the ends of her hair so as to save her beauty?' (218–19). On a stage where the only other character is asleep, who is Electra addressing here, if not the audience? As noticed by James Morwood, this is a clear example of metatheatrical audience address,[163] and we shall discuss further in Chapter 5 the place of such metatheatricality in Greek tragedy.

Other visual novelties are similarly underlined. When Pylades suggests fleeing, Orestes asks, in all likelihood drawing attention to the *eisodoi* once more, and possibly to mute characters standing as sentinels (*Or.* 760): 'Don't you see? (οὐκ ὁρᾷς;) We are guarded by sentinels on every side', and Pylades admits that he has seen them (*Or.* 761: εἶδον). Later on, the anticipated return of Orestes and Pylades from the assembly, defeated and lamenting, is announced as a 'bitter spectacle and wretched sight' (*Or.* 952: πικρὸν θέαμα καὶ πρόσοψις ἀθλία), thus drawing attention once more to the unattractive appearance of Orestes (here with Pylades). Most importantly, of course, the final and arguably most novel part of the drama, in which Helen is 'murdered' and Hermione taken hostage, is saturated with language of eyes, watching, seeing, and observing.[164] In this way, Euripides reminds his audience of his visual innovations in terms of stage spectacle. One can compare the absence of physical recognition tokens in *Iphigenia among the Taurians*. Visually these are replaced by Iphigenia's letter, a novel and typically Euripidean stage property. The letter is not a recognition *token* but its existence is what precipitates the recognition scene in Euripides, and is a visual focus for audience attention for a period of 70 lines during the build-up to the recognition (*IT* 725–95).[165] Similarly in *Electra*, the absence of recognition tokens focuses audience attention on the physicality of Orestes' person, his mask especially, as this is examined by the Old

[163] Morwood (2002) 67–8.

[164] *Or.* 1313, 1319, 1339, 1343, 1347, 1357, 1386, 1410, 1458, 1481, 1504, 1520, 1523, 1536, 1541, 1549, 1573.

[165] The importance of letters in Euripidean drama is discussed in Ch. 3.

Man to identify his scar. Textual allusions help to structure *Orestes* as a framework of references to the *Oresteia*, but they also stress the new visual and thematic emphases of Euripidean drama. In case we have not quite appreciated Euripidean novelties, the internal spectators within the drama, the chorus, comment on the *kainon epi kainōn* 'novelty upon novelties' in the drama's dénouement (*Or.* 1503–4), a double exploitation of the trigger word *kainos*, whose importance in Euripidean drama will be discussed in detail in Chapter 4. Euripides engages with the *Oresteia* in order to highlight the novelties he has managed to create, not only within the strictures of the tragic genre, but also within the constraints of a mythic saga that had been reworked numerous times by several tragedians.

RECOGNIZING METAPOETICS

When challenged by Menelaus on his apparent murder of Helen, Orestes replies 'I will not tire of always killing evil women' (*Or.* 1590). With this one statement, the character acknowledges his own tragic legacy. Orestes is defined by his murder of an evil woman in every tragedy that deals with his mythological experiences. This includes Aeschylus' *Libation Bearers* and *Eumenides*, Sophocles' *Electra*, Euripides' *Electra*, *Iphigenia among the Taurians*, *Orestes*, and even Euripides' *Andromache* and Sophocles' *Hermione* where he marries Hermione after having committed matricide (a union also prescribed at the end of *Orestes*). This central plot in Orestes' life is unchangeable and will be forever tied to the classic treatment it received in Aeschylus' trilogy. And yet, Euripides manages to deconstruct and reconfigure Aeschylean plot structure to achieve novel effects. In a culture where poets were conceived of metaphorically as craftsmen of physical objects, who joined words and phrases together with 'rivets' (*Frogs* 824, Telecleides fr. 42), Euripides has unscrewed the bolts of Aeschylean structure and reused them to create his own masterpiece. It is no coincidence, then, that in the comic treatment of Euripidean style, the chorus in Aristophanes' *Frogs* (822–8) expect Euripides to divide up the speeches which Aeschylus had riveted together.

The competitive nature of Greek dramatic performance and the confines of appropriate mythological material necessarily entail conditions in which tragic poets are deeply conscious of their

posteriority vis-à-vis previous successful poetic treatments from their common pool of myths. The recognition scenes of *Electra* and *IT* are similarly rich in demonstrating the complex interplay of Aeschylean influence and poetic self-consciousness in Euripidean drama. As a stock feature of tragic poetry, the recognition scene is also an obvious mechanism through which to invite *audience* recognition of metapoetic suggestions or narrative. Allusion is not in itself a distinctive feature of Euripidean drama,[166] but Euripides is the tragedian whose plays most express anxieties about mythological constraints. His characters often question established mythology or invite the audience to question it.[167] Furthurmore, Euripides *is* different from the other tragedians in the complexities of his challenges to the boundaries of dramatic illusion which he stretches in new ways, all the while respecting the conventions of the tragic genre. Through intertextuality, metaphor, word-play, and the language of optics, Euripides invites the audience to consider the difficulties the tragic poet faces in composing a new drama while, by necessity, following in the footsteps of great predecessors. Inevitably, not all members of the audience will respond to these invitations. That does not mean they are not there.[168] We remember that tragedy cannot actually *break* dramatic illusion the way comedy can, though it seems fitting to recall here the passage from Aristophanes' *Clouds* (534–6) where Electra's recognition of her brother's hair is taken for granted (as in Aeschylus),[169] and is used as a metaphor for the comedy's own hopes of finding intelligent spectators.

[166] See Garner (1990) on allusion in early Greek poetry, Wright (2010) on Euripides and early Greek poetics, and Ch. 5 on metapoetry in Greek drama more generally.

[167] The gods are unwise or unjust at *Andr.* 1164–5, *El.* 971–2, 1245–6, *Her.* 347, *Ion* 441–3, 1313, *Or.* 417 (cf. *Hipp.* 120, *Pho.* 86). Mortals do not believe the stories told about the gods at *Her.* 1340–6, *IT* 380–91, *Tro.* 971–82; see Stinton (1976), Mastronarde (1986), Yunis (1988) 76 and 144 n. 10, Cropp (2000) *ad* 380–91, Lefkowitz (2003).

[168] So also Winnington-Ingram (2003) 60–1.

[169] Cf. Sommerstein (1998) *ad* 534.

2

Intertextual *Ekphrasis*

The descriptive power of Euripidean language to evoke works of art in the imagination of his viewers is clearly related to claims by ancient biographers that he had trained as a painter, whether or not this is actually true.[1] Several important studies of Euripidean language have rightly emphasized the interconnection between poetry and the visual arts in fifth-century Athens. Shirley Barlow's pioneering work, first published in 1971, remains a key study of imagery in Euripides, organized by narrative mode.[2] Barlow concludes that Euripidean evocation of tangible and physical artefacts coincides with his more rationalistic (and less theological) outlook than, say, Aeschylus. Froma Zeitlin acknowledges the significance of Barlow's work in her own illuminating discussions of *ekphrasis* in Euripides, where she emphasizes the connection between *ekphrasis* and spectacle in the dynamics of several tragedies.[3] In the 2008 introduction to the third edition of Barlow's *The Imagery of Euripides*, the author hopes that 'this decade will produce fresh stylistic studies of Euripidean language

[1] *Life of Euripides* 17–18, *Suda s.v.* Euripides E.3695.4 (Kovacs (1994) 10–11). Stieber (2011) 195–274 illustrates how the evidence of Euripidean drama confirms the author's keen interest in painting, even if the biographical record is untrue. See also Zeitlin (1994) 141 and *passim*, and Barlow (2008) [1971].

[2] Barlow (2008) [1971] is organized around choral odes, monody and lyric dialogue, messenger speeches, iambic dialogue, with a section devoted to simile and metaphor; Kurtz (1985) also uses several of these categories in his study of imagery in Euripides, and addresses the different functions of imagery for purposes of illustration, argumentation, characterization, and so on; he also provides a broad contextual overview of earlier Greek sources for Euripidean imagery.

[3] Zeitlin (1994) focuses on *Ion*, *Iphigenia at Aulis*, and *Phoenician Women*; Zeitlin (1995) analyses the connections between art, memory, and *kleos* for understanding the *IA*; Zeitlin (1996) 285–338 discusses signs and wonders in *Ion* at 326–31.

building upon what has gone before'.[4] A new study by archaeologist and art historian Mary Stieber responds to this hope in an impressively comprehensive study of Euripides' use of the technical language of craft. Stieber demonstrates how Euripidean drama is saturated with the language of craft-working from multiple fields including architecture, masonry, sculpture, wall-painting, vase-painting, and weaving. She provides new readings of many problematic passages of dense metaphor or obscure terminology.[5]

The aim of this chapter is to contribute to this ongoing scholarly analysis of Euripides' use of artistic language by linking several examples of Euripidean *ekphrasis* with the intertextual models to which they respond (literary or artistic). If an *ekphrasis* is defined as a description of a work of art within a larger work (here a drama), constructed in such a way as to invite the audience to respond to and interpret the significance of that work of art,[6] then audience engagement with the artistic microcosm of the *ekphrasis* can function in turn as 'a metaphor for an audience's response to poetry' as formulated by Andrew Sprague Becker.[7] Euripides seems to favour *ekphraseis*. None are found in extant Sophocles. One piece of extended *ekphrasis* features in Aeschylus' *Seven Against Thebes*—the descriptions of the shield emblems of each of the seven attackers. In each case Eteocles decodes the significance of the images, and attempts to neutralize their threat.[8] A further fragment from Aeschylus' satyr-drama *Theōroi* features a group of satyrs about to affix painted images of themselves, probably masks, to the temple of Poseidon at the Isthmus of Corinth (fr. 78a).[9] They draw attention to the true likeness of the images, suggesting that they would fool their own mothers (fr. 78a.6–7, 14–17).[10] This comparative material allows us to see

[4] Barlow (2008) xx.

[5] Stieber (2011).

[6] See Becker (1995) 27–31 on how ancient handbooks on rhetoric emphasized an interdependence between description and interpretation.

[7] Becker (1995) 4.

[8] The shield *ekphraseis* and their interpretation by Eteocles are discussed in most detail by Zeitlin (2009) 33–119; see also Torrance (2007) 64–91, Judet de la Combe (1987), Thalmann (1978) 105–35, Cameron (1970), Bernadete (1968), Fraenkel (1964) 273–328. Chaston (2010) 67–130 argues that Eteocles superimposes new images over the shield *ekphraseis*, but her focus on imagery means that she loses sight of the importance of *language* in Eteocles' hermeneutic approach.

[9] See Zeitlin (1994) 138, O'Sullivan (2000) 357 with n. 21, Kaimio et al. (2001) 56–8, and Ch. 5, p. 278 with n. 54.

[10] See further Ch. 5, pp. 278–10.

exactly how Euripides' ekphrastic technique differs from that of Aeschylus. Specifically, we see how characters in Aeschylus interpret the significance or aesthetic value of ekphrastic images for the audience. Euripidean *ekphraseis*, however, generally eschew interpretation by characters within the drama. Rather, as I argue, intertextual *ekphraseis* in Euripides function in relation to an earlier text, or a familiar image, or both, in ways which invite audience responses in interpreting their significance. *Ekphrasis*, for Euripides, always has the potential to be a metapoetic strategy.

Some scholars have argued that Euripides tends towards the 'inappropriate' in his dramas,[11] but his intertextual *ekphraseis* actually demonstrate a deep concern with the poetic principle of appropriateness. This principle, '*to prepon*' in Greek, has been well documented in archaic and classical Greek poetry. In its earliest formulations, the concept has to do primarily with appropriate subject matter. So Alcman tells us that paeans are appropriate for public banquets (98 *PMG*), and Sappho that dirges are not appropriate among the servants of the Muses (150 LP). Stesichorus elucidates that lamentations are the lot of Hades while Apollo loves sportive songs (232.2–3 *PMG*).[12] By the end of the fifth century, the notion that poetry should be of a type appropriate to its context remains standard. Thus the chorus-leader in *Frogs* (371) urges the chorus to sing all-night revels 'which are appropriate to the festival', and we shall return to the issue of genre-appropriate material in Chapter 5. At the same time, as Andrew Ford has noticed, 'the discussion in *Frogs* of what makes a good song shows a blend of older notions of piety and social utility with newer interests in purely technical correctness and verbal skill'.[13] In the classical period, Ford summarizes, the concept of appropriateness 'was redefined from describing a song's social and religious "propriety" to prescribing "the proper and fitting" relation between the formal and thematic elements within a text'.[14] Ford adduces examples from Herodotus, Plato, Aristotle, and Isocrates which clearly attest to this shift in emphasis.[15] In this chapter, I show that Euripides' intertextual *ekphraseis* demonstrate precisely such preoccupations with linguistic correctness and thematic appropriateness,

[11] Arnott (1973) 62, Michelini (1987) 71, Croally (1994) 237; cf. Knox (1979) 254.
[12] Ford (2002) 13–17 discusses these passages and other examples from Bacchylides and Pindar.
[13] Ford (2002) 20. [14] Ford (2002) 13. [15] Ford (2002) 19–22.

particularly in relation to the sources they evoke. I demonstrate that Euripides' engagement with Homer is more neutral than his response to Aeschylus, and suggest that the latter should be linked conceptually to the Greek practice of combative literary capping.

TEMPLE ARCHITECTURE

Two Euripidean dramas contain detailed descriptions of temple architecture, an imagined barbarian temple in *Iphigenia among the Taurians*, and the real temple of Apollo at Delphi in *Ion*. A third drama, *Hypsipyle*, contains a fragment where one character invites another to view the painted reliefs of a different existing temple, that of Zeus at Nemea (fr. 752c). There may well have been an extended *ekphrasis* of the temple architecture, but this has not survived in the fragments. Aeschylus also wrote a *Hypsipyle*, which may have been part of a connected tetralogy—*Lemnian Women*, *Hypsipyle*, *Cabeiri*, and *The Argo*[16]—but there is no way to tell from the meagre fragments of these lost plays whether or how Euripides' *Hypsipyle* might have engaged with Aeschylus' treatment of this saga. A further lost play by Aeschylus, *Nemea*, may have corresponded to the subject matter of Euripides' *Hypsipyle*, but again our evidence is too slight to make any further judgment.[17]

In the case of *Ion*, it is Sophocles who is known to have also written an *Ion*, probably the same play as his *Creusa*, which may have been a source of inspiration for Euripides in addition to contemporary art and architecture. It is impossible to establish a clear relationship between the treatments by Sophocles and Euripides, owing to the fragmentary nature of surviving evidence from Sophocles. Probability dictates that Sophocles' drama pre-dated that of Euripides, given the latter's date of *c.*413 and the length of Sophocles' career. Anne Pippin Burnett suggests that 1021ff. and 1269 of the extant *Ion*, both of which refer to the ill-disposition of stepmothers to stepchildren,

[16] Sommerstein (2008) iii. 250–1.

[17] Sommerstein (2008) iii. 154–5.

'sound as if they were playful criticisms of a previous play'.[18] One fragment from the lost tragedy, however, is particularly intriguing. Sophocles fr. 356 rewrites in iambic trimeters the elegiac couplet reported to have been inscribed on the temple of Apollo at Delphi, namely 'the most just thing is the most honourable, health the most desirable, and sweetest of all is obtaining what one desires' (cf. Theognis 255–6, West). The context of the fragment is unknown, but the verbalization of text conforms to the pattern of allusions to text in other Sophoclean plays (see Ch. 3). If the Delphic inscriptions were an important feature in Sophocles' *Creusa*, then Euripides is operating within a tradition of alluding to contemporary architectural features in composing a tragedy on this mythic episode. We shall see in the next chapter that Euripides was very much interested in the power and potential of writing and inscriptions. Indeed his *Suppliants* ends with the inscription of an oath of alliance between Athens and Argos on a bronze tripod which is to be displayed at the temple of Apollo in Delphi.

Writing in Euripides is tied to the concept of fiction. It is not surprising then to find no mention of Delphic inscriptions in his *Ion*, a tragedy which plays with the very notion of 'weaving' a plot, as was discussed in Chapter 1. The fact remains, however, that Euripides' *Ion* contains an extended description of one of the most famous contemporary temples for fifth-century Athenians. Scholars have long sought, and failed, to match the descriptions to the archaeological evidence for the fifth-century Delphic temple, and it seems best to understand much of the ekphrastic imagery in terms of its broader thematic significance within the play.[19] Stieber's recent discussion of the issue suggests that the description is meant to evoke an imagined older temple from mythic history, and that the images described will have been familiar to the audience through various artistic media.[20] The argument that Euripides was not attempting to describe the actual Delphic temple would be supported by his tendency to mark his own work as distinct from his predecessors. If Sophocles had indeed made use of the familiar fifth-century

[18] Burnett (1971) 103 n. 4, who further deduces that Sophocles' play must have been set in Athens, but Lee (1997*a*) 39 sees no justification for the assumption that the setting at Delphi was a Euripidean innovation.

[19] See Owen (1939) 82–6, G. Müller (1975), Lee (1997*a*) 177–9.

[20] Stieber (2011) 284–302.

architectural features of the temple, Euripides will have avoided doing the same.

Freed from the shackles of attempting to make precise architectural sense of the temple *ekphrasis*, elements previously perceived as problematic can be read as entirely appropriate to the drama, both thematically and structurally. The 'twin faces' (*Ion* 188–9: *διδύμων προσώπων*) described by the chorus must refer to the pediments of the temple, although the chorus can logically only see one.[21] The 'double' architecture, however, is intrinsically appropriate to this particular drama whose title character and inhabitant of the temple turns out to have two mothers (Pythia, Creusa), two fathers (Apollo, Xuthus), and two selves (temple servant, founder of the Ionian race). Indeed, the inheritance of Athens itself is presented as dualistic through the two drops of Gorgon's blood bestowed on Erichthonius and now in the possession of Creusa. One is deadly, the other cures diseases (*Ion* 1005). Of course, this drama also contains two extended *ekphraseis*, one of the temple, and one of the tent tapestries (discussed in Chapter 1).[22]

The temple *ekphrasis* is littered with invitations to *see* and *look at* the sculptures being described (*Ion* 190, 193, 206, 209). A sequence of questions and answers is established between the chorus members, where one asks 'do you see . . . ?' (or equivalent) and another responds in the affirmative. Asking questions which require answers is far more engaging to an audience than an unpunctuated descriptive song, since the audience too has a chance to look and see and interpret. The second antistrophe, seems especially to invite a hermeneutic response from the audience. Our gaze is directed to a man mounted on a winged horse slaying a triple-bodied fire-breathing monster (*Ion* 201–4). The figures are unnamed, which means that the audience must connect the description with the famous mythic episode of Bellerophon on Pegasus slaying the Chimaera. Similarly the son of Zeus slaying the Hydra must be interpreted as Heracles (*Ion* 191–2). Could the audience see such images represented on the stage

[21] See Lee (1997*a*) *ad* 188–9 and Owen (1939) *ad* 188. Stieber (2011) 292 shows that the unusual metaphor 'eye-lidded' used of the 'faces' is related to pedimental architecture with 'their overhung raking cornices as if the latter were eyelids'.

[22] On issues of doubling, repetition, and re-enactment in *Ion*, see esp. Zeitlin (1996) 285–338, and cf. Wolff (1965) 171–3, 179, and Goff (1988*b*) 48. On the thematic and imagistic connections between the two *ekphraseis*, see Goff (1988*b*), Zeitlin (1994) 147–56 and (1996) 316–20, 326–31, Mastronarde (2003).

building? Our knowledge of fifth-century scene-painting conventions is frustratingly limited. It seems unlikely that the detail described in the *parodos* could have been rendered effectively on a fifth-century *skēnē*, especially given that the chorus describe both the east and west façades of the temple. Owen's suggestion that the scenes might have been painted on the projecting wings of the set is completely speculative.[23] Lee rightly emphasizes tragedy's reliance on the audience's response to the verbal description.[24] Nevertheless, a middle ground between these two positions seems possible, if not probable. We know that Aeschylus must have made impressive use of the colour red in staging his *Oresteia*, and indeed that many tragedies made important use of stage properties, especially altars, statues, and weapons, in addition to elaborate costumes.[25] It seems reasonable to suppose in this context that some attempt was made to correlate the stage building with how it was to be imagined by the chorus, possibly with a roughly outlined representation of one of the sculptural scenes described. This cannot ultimately be proved, of course, and the potential intertextual relationship between the *ekphraseis* in *Ion* and the content of Sophocles' *Creusa*, unfortunately, cannot be pressed. However, what does emerge from this brief survey of the temple *ekphrasis* in *Ion* is that it is a significant metapoetic device for stimulating audience response to the dynamics of structurally and thematically appropriate imagery, rather than being merely 'decorative' in function.[26] With this in mind, we can now turn to the intertextual temple *ekphrasis* of *Iphigenia among the Taurians* where the *Oresteia* continues to be an undeniable intertextual source.

EXTERNAL AND INTERNAL VISION IN *IPHIGENIA AMONG THE TAURIANS*

The description of the temple in the prologue of the *IT* is saturated with references to seeing and observing, directing the spectator's gaze

[23] Owen (1939) 83. [24] Lee (1997*a*) 198.

[25] See Taplin (1978) 80–5 on blood-coloured cloth used in staging the *Oresteia*, and 77–100 on objects and tokens. On costume in tragedy more generally see Wyles (2010) and (2011) and on masks see also Hall (2006) 99–141.

[26] *Pace* Wilamowitz-Moellendorff (1926) 14–15, Wolff (1965) 179.

to every part of the acting space. 'Look out!' (ὅρα) says Orestes to Pylades (*IT* 67), afraid that someone might apprehend them. 'I am looking!', responds Pylades, 'I am watching out, turning my eye in every direction' (*IT* 68: ὁρῶ, σκοποῦμαι δ' ὄμμα πανταχῇ στρέφων). Presumably this is accompanied by gestures of gazing intently up and down the *eisodoi*. They then turn their attention to the temple and its altar in front of them in a sequence of questions asked by Orestes and answered by Pylades. Are these the halls of the goddess they set sail to find? Yes (*IT* 69–71). Is this the altar from which drips Greek blood? Yes, the altar 'has brown strands' (ξάνθ' ἔχει τριχώματα) from the shedding of blood (*IT* 72–3). The τριχώματα, normally 'strands of hair', are a metaphor for the 'strands' or 'veins' of blood on the altar of human sacrifice, and may have evoked imagery of scalping, as I have argued elsewhere.[27] Does Pylades see (ὁρᾷς) the trophies hanging from the 'copings' (θριγκοῖς)? He does, and continues looking around and casting a circling eye about the place (*IT* 74–5). Orestes points out (cf. ὁρᾷς 'you see') the high encircling walls of the temple, the bronze-wrought bars on its doors (*IT* 96–7). This emphasis on sight and on the observation of the temple architecture and accompanying altar casts Orestes and Pylades as internal spectators, guiding the audience of external spectators to focus their gaze on the *skēnē* in front of them. Pylades even bids Orestes to see (ὅρα) *inside* the triglyphs of the temple (*IT* 113), considering how they might enter undetected to steal the statue of Artemis, thus prompting the viewer to visualize the internal space of the temple.[28] The chorus also direct attention to the 'golden copings (θριγκούς) of the fine-columned temple (εὐστύλων | ναῶν)' in their *parodos* (*IT* 128–9), and later to 'the human blood that soaks the altars and columned temples' of the land (*IT* 404–6).

These details of the external architecture tie the *skēnē* structurally and thematically to the product of Iphigenia's internal vision, the dream she reports in the prologue immediately preceding the arrival of Orestes and Pylades. Greeks in the classical period conceived of vision as an active process involving particles emanating from the eye

[27] Torrance (2009*b*).

[28] There is some corruption to the text at *IT* 113–14 and commentators have had difficulty making sense of the passage. Kyriakou (2006) *ad* 113–14a comments that 'it was unlikely that there were such openings' (cf. Cropp (2000) *ad* 113–14), but Stieber (2011) 67–73 argues that a clear meaning can be recovered if we understand that Pylades has observed 'an empty or missing metope' (70).

onto the object of sight, and dream visions were similarly considered active rather than passive experiences.[29] Iphigenia dreams of being in the palace at Argos where she sees (cf. *εἰσιδεῖν*) the 'coping' (*θριγκόν*) of her ancestral halls falling (*IT* 47–8). 'One column alone remained' (*IT* 50–1: *μόνος δ' ἐλείφθη στῦλος*). The column grew 'brown hair' (*IT* 51–2: *κόμας | ξανθάς*) and took on a human voice.[30] The vocabulary of architecture, in particular that of columns and copings, coupled with the reference to the uncanny 'brown hair', creates a striking parallel between the dream vision and the external performance space observed in the architectural *ekphrasis*. In her dream, Iphigenia sprinkles the hair with lustral water and interprets the significance of this retrospectively. The column must represent Orestes 'since male children are the columns of the household' (*IT* 57: *στῦλοι γὰρ οἴκων παῖδές εἰσιν ἄρσενες*). Orestes must be dead, concludes Iphigenia, mistakenly, because those she anoints with lustral water die on the altar of Artemis (*IT* 56–8).[31]

It seems probable that masks representing human skulls (or possibly human scalps) were affixed to the *skēnē*. This is suggested by Orestes' observations of 'trophies' (*σκῦλ'*) identified by Pylades as 'the topmost parts (*ἀκροθίνια*) of the foreigners who have died' in the temple *ekphrasis* (*IT* 74–5). Later the sacrificial victims themselves are called *ἀκροθίνια* 'topmost offerings' (*IT* 459) which would seem to confirm that the 'trophies' were human heads. The presence of masks is suggested also by ethnographic references to Taurians, and

[29] For Empedocles the eye functioned by emitting light (DK 1B.84). Bartsch (2006) 58–67 summarizes various ancient theories of optics; on Greek attitudes to dreams, see Dodds (1951) 102–34. Scholars have noted some similarities between Iphigenia's dream in *IT* and Clytemnestra's dream in *Libation Bearers*. For example, both women have symbolic dreams about Orestes (rather than messenger-type dreams) and both women arrange funerary libations as a direct result of their respective dreams; see further Zeitlin (2005) 210, Bosher (2009) 3–8.

[30] The voice in the dream is paradoxically uncommunicative, prefiguring the lack of communication between Iphigenia and Orestes in the first half of the play, and perhaps anticipating the explanation that Zeus stopped dreams from 'speaking' to mortals (cf. *IT* 1267 and 1276).

[31] Iphigenia's interpretation of her dream is not technically incorrect. The pillar *does* symbolize Orestes and her sprinkling of lustral water *does* relate to his potential death. Before the recognition scene, Iphigenia will be on the point of consecrating Orestes for slaughter. Iphigenia's mistake is that she has interpreted the dream retrospectively rather than prospectively. This will later be revealed as thematically relevant to the play. In the third *stasimon* (*IT* 1234–82) we learn how Zeus supported Apollo in making the dreams sent by Gaia unfathomable to mortals so that his oracle would become indispensable for prophetic insight.

to Scythians more generally, decapitating and scalping their enemies in Herodotus (4.103, and cf. *IT* 1429–30), by a parallel in Sophocles' *Oenomaeus* of affixing severed heads to a building in order to instil fear (fr. 473), and by a fourth century vase-painting depicting a scene from the *IT*.[32] The audience, of course, is made aware that Orestes is very much alive and is actually in danger of being sacrificed by an unwitting Iphigenia.[33] The glaring flaw in Iphigenia's interpretation of the dream functions as an invitation to the audience to interpret the dream correctly for themselves. In an established literary culture where dreams are almost always prophetic (apart from the notable false dream sent by Zeus to Agamemnon in *Iliad* 2), the true meaning of the dream as a prospective rather than retrospective truth will be obvious to the audience.[34] It is implied that the Orestes 'column' in Iphigenia's dream is on the verge of becoming a real column of the temple we see, stained with the blood of human slaughter (cf. *IT* 404–6), and affixed with remains of a human head.

The metaphor of Orestes as column with disembodied voice and human hair, although bizarre, is nevertheless completely appropriate to the details of the temple *ekphrasis*. Moreover, the rarity of the metaphor suggests a further degree of appropriateness in intertextual terms. Richard Garner notes that there is only one other example in classical Greek of the word *στῦλος* 'column' used as a metaphor for a human being.[35] It is not surprising to find that this comes from Aeschylus' *Oresteia*. In Clytemnestra's speech to her returning husband Agamemnon, she addresses him as *ὑψηλῆς στέγης | στῦλον ποδήρη, μονογενὲς τέκνον πατρί* 'firm column of a lofty roof, only child born to a father' (*Ag.* 898–9). Aeschylus' use of this image is not

[32] Taplin (2007) 155–6 analyses evidence from vase-painting. For more detailed discussion of the issue in the *IT* see Torrance (2009*b*) 24–7.

[33] Creating a disparity between the knowledge of poetic characters and the understanding of the audience is a common poetic technique. Goldhill (1991) 58–9 discusses how the *Odyssey* 'develops (its representation of) the exchange of poetic performance' through 'the contrasting responses of audience and performers'. Trieschnigg (2008) 463–75 discusses in detail the 'wedge' between the audience and the characters caused by the report of the dream and subsequent events in *IT*.

[34] Cf. Trieschnigg (2008) 461 and 464 n. 10.

[35] Garner (1990) 170; cf. Devereux (1976) 283, who notes that 'the representation of a human being by a mere object (in dream) occurs only in *IT*', though Devereux's reductive analysis of Euripidean dreams as re-enacting a Freudian 'primal scene', that is 'the child's real or fantasied . . . experience of his parents' coitus' (259) was rightly challenged by reviewers; cf. e.g. Lefkowitz (1977) and Diggle (1978).

completely appropriate, however, since Agamemnon is *not* the only child born to his father, nor even the only son.[36] The allusion seems designed to underline Euripides' more appropriate linguistic application of the single column as metaphor for the *only* male child.

Interestingly, the rare term μονογενές 'only child' occurs in Euripides' earlier *Cresphontes* (fr. 448a, 109), in a passage which seems to be functioning along similar lines. There the term is appropriately applied to the title character as the only surviving child of his house. The plot of *Cresphontes* is similar to that of Aeschylus' *Libation Bearers*, and may well have been invented by Euripides, since there is no trace of an earlier tradition, either literary or artistic.[37] Its date is uncertain but since fr. 453 was parodied in Aristophanes' *Geōrgoi* the *terminus ante quem* is 424 or 421,[38] making it, in all probability, earlier than Euripides' *Electra*.[39] A descendant of Heracles, Cresphontes has grown up in exile (like Orestes) because his father has been murdered by a relative who has usurped the throne (like Orestes). Cresphontes' mother Merope (unlike Clytemnestra) has had no part in the murder and has been forced into marriage with the usurper against her will. In addition, Polyphontes, the usurper, has killed not only his brother the king (also called Cresphontes) but two of his three sons, clearly making Cresphontes the last remaining child. Once Cresphontes has reached adulthood, he comes back to Messenia in disguise, bringing news of his own death (like Orestes in *Libation Bearers*) all the while planning to avenge his father's death by murdering the usurper. As in Aeschylus, the returning exile is welcomed into the house but in a case of mistaken identity, while Cresphontes is sleeping, Merope, believing that Cresphontes is the man who has murdered her son, attempts to kill him with an axe (Plutarch, *Moralia* 998e). This detail

[36] Cf. Hdt. 5.48 where the term ἄπαις 'childless' is used to mean 'without a son' with Powell (1960) *s.v.* ἄπαις.

[37] This hypothesis is supported by the fact that Polyphontes' identity is explained at fr. 448a43 suggesting that his character is a Euripidean invention. Cf. Cropp (1997) *ad loc.* and Harder (1985) 9. See also Harder (1985) 7 on lack of supporting artistic evidence. Set in Messenia, it coincides with the Athenian desire in the mid-420s to construct a mythical identity for Messenia separate from that of Sparta, on which see Luraghi (2008) 46–67, with 61–2 on E. *Cres.* (my thanks to Jeffrey Henderson for this reference).

[38] Harder (1985) 3, Cropp (1997) 125.

[39] Euripides' *Electra* is dated to 422–417 with 420 or 419 the most likely (see Cropp (1988) li).

recalls the Clytemnestra of *Libation-Bearers* who had called for someone to bring her a 'man-killing axe' (889) when her life is threatened by Orestes. In Euripides' death-averted plot, Cresphontes is recognized at the last moment by a servant, and mother and son then plan and execute the murder of Polyphontes.[40]

It is striking that two Euripidean tragedies correctly appropriate obscure language and metaphor from this one passage in Aeschylus. This kind of allusion to Aeschylus recalls the Aristophanic parody of Euripides testing the tragedies of Aeschylus 'word by word' and scrutinizing his work from all angles (*Frogs* 801–2, 836), exposing inconsistencies or errors in his use of language (*Frogs* 1125–74). In the *IT*, it is specifically the architectural imagery which is reappropriated. The single 'human' column remains after the palace is shaken by an earthquake and crumbles to the ground ἐξ ἄκρων σταθμῶν 'from the tops of the columns' (*IT* 49). This echoes language from the same Aeschylean passage where Clytemnestra had addressed Agamemnon as τῶν σταθμῶν κύνα 'watchdog of the columns' (*Ag.* 896), where the 'columns' stand metonymically for the palace. Again Clytemnestra's language is problematic. Having been absent for many years, it hardly seems reasonable to call Agamemnon the palace's watchdog. In fact, the image had been attributed to the Watchman who was keeping watch 'like a dog' (*Ag.* 3).

The emphasis on the architectural features of the palace in Iphigenia's dream—the coping stone (*IT* 47: θριγκόν), the roof (*IT* 48: στέγος), and especially the columns (*IT* 49, 50 σταθμῶν, στῦλος)—reinforce the architectural elements of the temple before us, which will presently be described by Orestes and Pylades in the second half of the prologue.[41] So Iphigenia's 'internal vision' replicates elements of the external spectacle of the temple façade. Indeed, this would be doubly so if there were just one mask affixed to the colonnaded temple as may be suggested by a vase-painting inspired by this play.[42] A single mask would reflect the potential fate of Orestes in conjunction with Iphigenia's dream of the single column with human hair and voice. The horrifying evidence of human sacrifice

[40] See commentaries by Cropp (1997) and Harder (1985) for further parallels between *Cresphontes* and the *Oresteia* tragedies.

[41] Language of sight and masonry emphasizes an imposing building in *Helen* also (430–1).

[42] Taplin (2007) 155–6.

on the stage set, which the audience is invited to view and interpret, represents a concretization of the metaphors in Iphigenia's dream. As the dream is being related, the spectators hear of the imaginary collapse of one building while gazing on the representational fixity of a building with many of the same features. The dream's intertextual allusions to Aeschylus suggest that the literary edifice of the *Oresteia* is shaken to the ground, in a culture where poetry itself could be conceived of as an architectural structure.[43] In the *IT*, what remains of the Oresteian 'edifice' is presented in mutated form, like the one remaining column of the palace: Iphigenia is not dead, the Furies were not altogether appeased by Athena's placations, Orestes has not yet been purified. The temple *ekphrasis* in the prologue of the *IT* thus functions in conjunction with Iphigenia's dream as structurally and thematically appropriate to the exotically gory setting. Reappropriated architectural language ties the prologue intertextually to Aeschylus' *Agamemnon* creating a metapoetic suggestion that the *Oresteia* is being rewritten, a suggestion which, as we saw in Chapter 1, is validated over and over again as the tragedy progresses.

WARRIORS AT ARMS: HOMER, AESCHYLUS, EURIPIDES

The paradigm of ancient *ekphrasis* is Homer's shield of Achilles described, along with his other arms, in *Iliad* 18.[44] The shield features a myriad of images, many of which are unrelated to war, a fact which has sometimes perplexed scholars. The personifications of Hate, Confusion, and Death are mentioned briefly (*Il.* 18.535) but there is a strong emphasis on images from agriculture, dancing, and peaceful urban life. Oliver Taplin has demonstrated that the symbolism on the shield reflects the broader structure of the *Iliad*. While the epic's central focus is on war, it is also concerned with creating an awareness of peacetime activities as a way of alleviating the relentlessness of war.

[43] Examples from early Greek poetry are collected by Nünlist (1998) 98–107.

[44] Hardie (1985) 11 and *passim*; Becker (1995) 9–22 gives a good overview of the importance of the Homeric shield *ekphrasis* for theories of description, with particular attention given to the works of Edmund Burke and Gotthold Lessing. He discusses the views of ancient rhetoricians on the functions of *ekphrasis* (23–40).

So, for example, Iliadic similes are often drawn from the worlds of farming, carpentry, or metal-working.[45] More recently Stephen Scully has argued that the repeated response of fear by characters within the *Iliad* on seeing the arms of Achilles lends more weight to the figures of terror on the shield than previously acknowledged.[46] On both readings, the shield functions as a *mise en abîme*, a refraction in miniature of the entire work, in a term which coincidentally derives from heraldry, first coined in the literary-artistic sense by André Gide.[47] In his detailed analysis of the shield *ekphrasis* within the poetics of the *Iliad*, Andrew Sprague Becker discusses the complex dynamics of the shield's creation (by Hephaestus and by the bard) with how it is viewed (by the audience through the bard). He concludes that 'the Shield is a lesson in responding to works of art, be they songs or reliefs in metal'.[48] The shield *ekphrasis* in *Iliad* 18, like the weaving *ekphrasis* in *Iliad* 3, shows the potential in early Greek poetry for exploring metapoetic strategies. Moreover, studies in Homer suggest that an extraordinary amount of intertextuality exists between and within the Homeric epics.[49] In a sense, then, Euripides is engaging with classic poetic techniques. What seems to be distinctive about Euripides, however, is his tendency to combine *ekphrasis* and intertextuality by rewriting earlier poetic *ekphraseis* of armour and men at arms. This occurs in *Electra*, in *Iphigenia at Aulis*, and in *Phoenician Women*.

The Arms of Achilles in *Electra*

The first *stasimon* of *Electra* relates the presentation of the arms of Achilles, including a description of the arms forged by Hephaestus, where Achilles receives them from the Nereids at Chiron's cave *before* going to Troy. This is a remarkable alternative to the Homeric version where Achilles is brought new arms from Hephaestus' forge by his Nereid mother Thetis late in the Trojan War, to replace the set inherited from his father (*Il.* 17.194–7). Cropp observes that Attic black-figure vase-paintings depicting Achilles receiving his arms from

[45] Taplin (1980).
[46] Scully (2003).
[47] See Dällenbach (1989) 7–19.
[48] Becker (1995), quotation from 151.
[49] See especially Tsagalis (2008) and Pucci (1987).

Thetis and the Nereids at his father's home demonstrate an archaic tradition of a pre-war presentation of arms.[50] Aeschylus in his *Nereids* combined a presentation of the arms at Troy with the presence of Thetis *and* the Nereids.[51] The presentation at and departure from Chiron's cave seems to be a unique conflation of events created by Euripides. The glorification of Achilles in this ode, as a participant in the expedition against Troy, glorifies its leader Agamemnon. In this way, the chorus reflect the position of Electra, who idolizes Agamemnon as a victorious king throughout the play (*El.* 186–9, 336–8, 916–17, 1066). However, Pantelis Michelakis has demonstrated that the ode misappropriates the narrative technique of praise poetry. The individual praised in epinician poetry is subsumed into a group of 'such men' (*El.* 479–80) or 'men who' (Pindar, *Isthmian* 5.39) in order to ensure praise of the mythical hero, the victor to whom he is being compared, and the entire groups to which they each belong. But since Agamemnon is the 'lord' of 'such men' (*El.* 479–80), the praise of Agamemnon is exaggerated in a manner uncharacteristic of the epinician genre.[52] This conforms to this play's broader metapoetic agenda in playing with poetic conventions. Later in the drama, the chorus claim that myths (*mythoi*, 743) 'hold little credence' with them (737–8) once more reflecting Electra's attitude (when she rejected the Aeschylean *mythos*). Narrative strategy, then, is important in the first *stasimon*, as in the rest of the drama,[53] but what is the significance of the arms of Achilles *ekphrasis*?

The description of the arms in Euripides is as follows: on the outer circle of the shield is Perseus flying over the sea with winged sandals, holding the Gorgon's severed head, accompanied by Hermes (*El.* 458–62); the centre of the shield features the sun on winged horses and the Pleiades and Hyades constellations dancing in heaven (*El.* 464–8); on the helmet are Sphinxes clutching prey in their claws (*El.* 470–2); the corselet features the Chimaera (*El.* 473–5) and the sword depicts horses galloping, kicking up dust behind them (*El.* 476–7). A recent analysis by Eric Csapo argues persuasively that

[50] Cropp (1988) *ad* 442–51. The Nereids are often represented in art travelling across the sea, with each carrying one part of Achilles' armour. Details are collected by Noëlle Icard-Gianolio and Anne-Violaine Szabados, *LIMC* VI.1, 807–14, with accompanying plates.

[51] Sommerstein (2008) iii. 156.

[52] Michelakis (2002) 160–1.

[53] On narrative strategies in *Electra* see Goldhill (1986) 246–64 and (1994) 67–70.

the details of Achilles' armour in Euripides evoke the armour of Pheidias' Athena Parthenos sculpture that was on display in the Parthenon from the mid-fifth century BC.[54] Suggesting, as Csapo implicitly does, that Euripides appropriates the figure of Achilles and his celebrated arms for an Athenian audience by associating him with identifiably Athenian iconography is certainly an attractive hypothesis. Euripides does this also in *Ion* where images ostensibly at home in Delphi are full of iconography reminiscent of Athenian public art.[55] In the mythological images he chooses for the arms of Achilles, Euripides may well have 'followed art, not literature' as Csapo suggests.[56] Nevertheless, the very fact of describing these, especially the shield (which is described first and in most detail), *must* have reminded the audience of the famous Homeric model, and there may have been another important (now lost) literary model.

The plot of Aeschylus' *Nereids* seems to have included the arrival of Thetis and the Nereids with Achilles' new armour and the arming of Achilles.[57] Given the subject matter, and Aeschylus' interest in shield *ekphraseis* in his *Seven Against Thebes*, we might well assume some kind of description of arms in this lost play. Csapo argues that the presence of the Nereids in the first *stasimon* of Euripides' *Electra* suggests that it did allude in some way to Aeschylus' *Nereids*.[58] If the arms of Achilles *ekphrasis* in *Electra* alluded to an Aeschylean *ekphrasis*, this would explain why Euripides apparently seeks to rival Homer's description in this instance. Elsewhere Euripides appropriates epic models and transposes them into new contexts, but essentially presents continuations of (rather than rivals to) epic paradigms. As we shall see in Chapter 4, often these epic continuations are intertwined with episodes rivalling earlier tragedies so that the arms of Achilles *ekphrasis* may have been cast more specifically as a rival to a lost Aeschylean model rather than as a rival to Homer. In any case, the *ekphrasis* in Euripides retains the qualities of continuation and transposition that feature in his other engagements with epic models.

The opening words of the *stasimon* in *Electra* describe the 'famous ships' (*El.* 432: κλεινα‌ὶ νᾶες) of the Trojan expedition, and the shield

[54] Csapo (2009) esp. 99–104.
[55] Goff (1988*b*), Stieber (2011) 297–310, 334–6.
[56] Csapo (2009) 102.
[57] See Michelakis (2002) 52 and Sommerstein (2008) iii. 156–7.
[58] Csapo (2003) 73.

of Achilles itself is 'famous' (*El.* 455: κλεινᾶς ἀσπίδος). These are famous primarily from *literature*, and the ode itself 'is given an appropriately strong Homeric flavor by epic-Ionic diction and dialectical features'.[59] The images on the arms are described as *sēmata* (*El.* 456), a term referring to 'signs' that invite decoding and decipherment.[60] Such language seems designed to prompt interpretation, and comparison with Homer. In fact, several pictorial elements are common to both *ekphraseis*. Both shields feature the sea (*El.* 459–60, *Il.* 18.483, 606), the sun (*El.* 465, *Il.* 18.484), the Pleiades and Hyades constellations (*El.* 468, *Il.* 18.486), and dancing—the Nereids and the (anthropomorphic) constellations in Euripides (*El.* 434, 467), young people in Homer (*Il.* 18.494, 594, 603–4). Both helmets are made with gold (*El.* 470, *Il.* 18.612) and both corselets are associated with fire, the Homeric one 'shining brighter than fire' (*Il.* 18.610), the Euripidean one depicting the 'fire-breathing lioness with hooves', i.e. the Chimaera (*El.* 473–4). Perseus is a figure alien to the Homeric shield, but he features prominently on the pseudo-Hesiodic *Shield* (216–37), where he also has winged sandals and carries the Gorgon's head, though there it is in a pouch on his back. Perseus is highly relevant to the dramatic imagery of *Electra* since the image of the Gorgon-slayer foreshadows the actions of Orestes, later cast as a Gorgon-slayer (cf. *El.* 1221–3) with Clytemnestra as the Gorgon (*El.* 485–6, 1222–3), in a metaphor borrowed from Aeschylus where Orestes was imagined by the chorus as Perseus slaying the Gorgon Clytemnestra (*LB* 831–7).[61]

The imagery of this Euripidean *stasimon* has been well studied.[62] An issue which remains under-addressed, however, is the fact that the ode represents an open renegotiation of an extremely famous poetic paradigm. In a play which is itself a radical response to Aeschylus'

[59] Walsh (1977) 279 with n. 4.

[60] In the *Iliad*, for example, the lightning flashes of Zeus are interpreted as favourable *sēmata* (2.353) and the baleful *sēmata* inscribed on the tablet given to Bellerophon are meant to be interpreted by the recipient as a request to send Bellerophon to his death (6.168).

[61] The image of Orestes as 'Gorgon-slayer' is discussed by O'Brien (1964) esp. 17–25, Walsh (1977) 284–5, King (1980) 209–10. Hannah (2002) 24 argues that the presence of Perseus among the stars on the shield marks a Euripidean novelty in suggesting the catasterization of Perseus as a new concept in Greek astronomy; he also suggests that the presence of the Pleiades and Hyades is ominous, linked to the omen of bad weather associated with the appearance of these particular stars.

[62] See e.g. O'Brien (1964), Walsh (1977), King (1980), Morwood (1981) 363–4, Cropp (1988) *ad* 432–86, Hannah (2002), Zeitlin (2003*b* 270–1, 274–6, Csapo (2009).

earlier and influential *Oresteia* trilogy (as we saw in Ch. 1), the point should not be lost. In addition to reminding the audience that the topic in question is 'famous' (*El.* 432, 455) and that the emblems on Achilles' shield are *sēmata* (*El.* 456), and therefore open to interpretation, other strategies are deployed in the composition of the ode which might well provoke a hermeneutic response from the audience. The Chimaera and Pegasus are described but unnamed, for example (*El.* 474–6), forcing the audience to connect the description with the mythological beasts for themselves.[63] Interestingly, the *ekphrasis* is focalized from the point of view of a Trojan traveller, whom the chorus happened upon in the harbour at Nauplia (*El.* 452–3). It is from this man that the chorus have heard (ἔκλυον) of the *sēmata* which were terrifying to the Phrygians and turned back the eyes of Hector (*El.* 456–7, 468–9). The focalization is clearly intended to intensify our concept of the terror experienced by Achilles' enemies at the sight of the *sēmata*. The mention of Hector suggests a connection between his terror and the Homeric-toned image of galloping horses kicking up the dark dust depicted on Achilles' sword (*El.* 476–7, cf. e.g. *Il.* 11.151–2). The famous Homeric image of Achilles dragging Hector's body behind his chariot through the dust is evoked (*Il.* 22.395–404).[64] To return to the question of the significance of the *ekphrasis*, then, I suggest that its intertextual relationship with Homer is an important component within the metapoetics of the drama as a whole. This tragedy is unquestionably one of Euripides' most self-consciously intertextual and metapoetic works. Euripides takes on Titans of literary and poetic prowess in this play in revisiting exceptionally famous episodes from Homer and Aeschylus in combination.

Transposing the bestowing of the arms of Achilles to the country cave of Chiron functions as a thematically and structurally appropriate *mise en abîme* for the broader framework of the drama itself, which transposes mythological action from its traditional location in the palace of Agamemnon (in both Aeschylus and Sophocles) to the surrounding countryside. The descriptive language used in the shield *ekphrasis* evokes that same landscape in its details. Perseus is said to

[63] Csapo (2009) following Cropp (1988) 127 discusses how Euripides relied on audience recognition of a broader mythological scenario in many of the allusive details of this *stasimon*.

[64] The allusion is also noted and discussed in more detail by Csapo (2009) 103–4, 107–8; cf. also King (1980) 207–8 with n. 23.

be accompanied by Hermes 'Maia's rustic son (*kouros*)' (*El.* 462: τῷ Μαίας ἀγροτῆρι κούρῳ). This recalls the 'rustic courtyard' of the stage set (*El.* 168: ἀγρότειραν αὐλάν) mentioned by the chorus in their opening address to Electra as 'daughter (*kora*) of Agamemnon' (*El.* 167). The 'lookouts of the Nymphs' (*El.* 447) reflect the pleasant dwelling places of the Nymphs in which Aegisthus conducts his sacrifices (*El.* 625, 784–818, 1135).[65] Further details of language within the ode suggest metapoetic self-consciousness. The on-stage dancing of the tragic chorus is reflected in the 'choral dancing' of the Nereids (*El.* 434: χορεύματα)[66] and the 'choruses' of constellations on Achilles' shield (*El.* 467: χοροί), in a play where the chorus members draw attention to their dancing in a self-referential way.[67] Csapo has shown that Nereids 'are symbolic dancers . . . in Greek art, myth and literature . . . associated exclusively with choral dancing', and are strongly connected to Dionysus.[68] Reference to dancing Nereids, then, has a particularly strong metapoetic potential, in a choral performance at a festival in honour of Dionysus.[69] Already on the Homeric shield, Hubbard draws our attention to '[t]he dancing chorus's status as an emblem for Art in its purest form' so that the metapoetic potential of the chorus is present also in Homer, where the dancing choruses feature in the circle that focuses on the figure of the bard.[70] Hubbard reads the circular dancing of the chorus as 'a metaphor for both social community and artistic sophistication'.[71] Choral song may also be evoked in Euripides through the image of the golden Sphinxes of Achilles' helmet who carry ἀοίδιμον

[65] On the connection between the Nymphs of the first *stasimon* and Aegisthus' sacrifice to the Nymphs, see also Walsh (1977) 284, Morwood (1981) 367, and Cropp (1988) 129.

[66] Diggle's emendation for L's χοροὺς μετά in Diggle (1977) 111–12, and cf. West (1980) 14. Willink (2009) 206–7 prefers χοροὺς μετά, but the sense of choruses or choral dancing is clear.

[67] See Henrichs (1995) 86–90. King (1980) 199 (cf. 203–4) observes that the circular motions stressed in the shield of Achilles ode emphasize 'movement for the sheer joy of moving' in contrast to the linear progression associated with the expedition to Troy.

[68] Csapo (2003) 94–5.

[69] Henrichs (1995) 88 observes that choral self-referentiality in Euripides' *Electra* 'involves both the use of Dionysiac metaphor and the suppression of any direct reference to Dionysus'.

[70] Hubbard (1992) 33.

[71] Hubbard (1992) 34.

ἄγραν 'song-famed prey' (*El.* 470) in their talons, and are themselves songstresses.[72] This choral song's function of 'rewriting' earlier poetic traditions through intertextual *ekphrasis* thus makes its position within the drama highly strategic, since it immediately precedes the episode in which the Aeschylean recognition scene is challenged and a Homeric-type recognition is renegotiated.

The Catalogue of Ships in *Iphigenia at Aulis*

The first *stasimon* of *Electra* briefly mentions the famous ships (*El.* 432) of the Trojan expedition with their 'countless oars' and 'dark-beaked prows' (*El.* 433, 436–7). Just as the shield of Achilles is famous through the Homeric *ekphrasis*, the ships too are famous from the *Iliad*'s extensive catalogue of ships (2.484–759), and they are the subject of an elaborate description in part of the *parodos* of *Iphigenia at Aulis*, performed by a chorus of young married women (176, 615) on a sightseeing trip from Calchis. Their presence contributes much to the polarization of male and female concerns in the drama.[73] In contrast to the visitors to Delphi, who form the chorus in *Ion*, the gaze of these women is eroticized, as Froma Zeitlin has argued, through their female desire to observe the world of male warriors. This sense of excitement contributes to the visual clarity and vividness of their descriptions, which evoke artistic models.[74] In Homer, the catalogue of ships focuses on mythological genealogies of the leaders of each contingent, combined with geographically specific details of their provenance.[75] Little attention is given to the physical appearance of the ships. Of the twenty-nine squadrons listed, twelve are 'black',[76] with only the ships of Odysseus providing a burst of colour in the middle of the catalogue through their red bows (*Iliad* 2.637: νῆες . . . μιλτοπάρῃοι). As in the case of the Shield of Achilles *ekphraseis* in Homer and Euripides, it seems to be only in these two authors from the archaic and classical periods (as far as our evidence goes) that we find a catalogue of ships for the Trojan expedition. The second part of the *parodos* of *Iphigenia at Aulis* contains

[72] As we are reminded by Csapo (2009) 106–7.
[73] Morwood (2002) 79–80.
[74] Zeitlin (1994) 157–71.
[75] Cf. Visser (1997) 747.
[76] *Iliad* 2. 524, 534, 545, 556, 568, 630, 644, 652, 710, 737, 747, 759.

a catalogue of twelve ships, four of which are described in elaborate *ekphraseis*.[77] Each of these feature ornamental representations distinctive of their citizenship, as was common down to the end of the fifth century BC, at least.[78] Several textual critics have judged that this portion of the *IA* is interpolated, but others, including Walter Stockert, the editor of the most comprehensive recent edition, have defended its authenticity.[79] It is not my intention to become embroiled in a discussion on issues of textual authenticity. Rather, I discuss the *ekphraseis* in the *parodos* as part of the Euripidean corpus. To those who adamantly maintain that the passage is not authentic, I suggest that, even if this were the case, the catalogue of ships nevertheless features the same kind of literary techniques we have observed in other Euripidean tragedies.

It is clear that the Euripidean catalogue sought to evoke epic conventions through its liberal use of Homeric language.[80] In addition to this epic flavour of diction, several specific details illustrate that the Euripidean catalogue positions itself self-consciously in an intertextual relationship with Homer. The Iliadic catalogue names forty-four leaders, ten of whom are obscure figures who appear nowhere else in the *Iliad*.[81] Although the Euripidean catalogue contains descriptions of only twelve naval squadrons, it includes one of these elusive Iliadic characters—Gouneus. Within the Homeric catalogue the description of Gouneus' contingent is unusual, not simply because he never appears again in the epic, but also because he leads 'an eccentric number' of ships (twenty-two), he is given no patronymic, and the area of his provenance (Kyphos) is unknown.[82] He leads two tribes associated with Thessaly, the Enienes and the Peraiboi.[83] The former of these tribes seems to correspond to the Aenians

[77] There is a lacuna in the description of the Phocian contingent (after *IA* 261), which may or may not have described a ship emblem.

[78] Casson (1995) 344–6.

[79] Stockert (1992) esp. 232–3 with detailed references to scholarship on the authenticity issue. Günther (1998) prints all of 231–302 without square brackets. See also Jouan (1983) 29–30 (and cf. Jouan (1966) 293–8). Those who would excise *IA* 231–302 include Diggle (1994) for whom the passage is 'uix Euripidei' and Kovacs (2002*a*) whose apparatus reads '231–302 non ab Euripide profectos esse satis constat'.

[80] See Stockert (1992) *ad IA* 232, 238, 242ff., 250f., 254, 263f., 266, 273f., 283.

[81] Sammons (2010) 158.

[82] Kirk (1985) *ad* 2.748.

[83] Kirk (1985) *ad* 2.749–51.

named in Euripides as the people led by Gouneus (*IA* 277).[84] Why include this obscure figure, when many other options were available, if not to indicate a purposeful intertextual connection with the *Iliad*?

The names of the twelve contingents in Euripides are as follows: Myrmidons led by Achilles (*IA* 235–41), Argives led by Mecisteus' son (Euryalus) and Sthenelus (*IA* 242–7), Athenians led by Theseus' son (*IA* 247–52), Boeotians led by Leitus (*IA* 253–60), Phocians, whose leader must have been named in a lacuna (*IA* 261), Locrians led by Ajax son of Oileus (*IA* 262–4), Mycenaeans led by Agamemnon and Menelaus (*IA* 265–72), men of Pylos led by Nestor (*IA* 273–6), Aenians led by Gouneus (*IA* 277–9), Epeians led by Eurytus (*IA* 279–82), Taphians led by Meges (*IA* 283–7), Salaminians led by Ajax (*IA* 288–93). Several important Greek provinces are missing from the catalogue. There is no mention of Sparta, since Menelaus has been amalgamated with Agamemnon in leading the Mycenaeans. There are no Euboeans, no Arcadians, no Cretans, no Rhodians. Most conspicuous is the absence of the Cephallene ships of Odysseus. While Achilles and the Atreidae are central characters in the tragedy, Odysseus is the only other Greek naval commander to have an important, if off-stage, role in the play.[85] Omitting Odysseus from the catalogue dovetails well with his extremely negative presentation as a schemer and rabble-rouser baying for Iphigenia's blood (*IA* 513–37, 1355–68). He is not associated with the physical power of a fleet of ships, but is mentioned briefly in the first part of the *parodos* as one of the heroes at leisure on the beach: 'son of Laertes from the mountainous islands' (*IA* 203–4). He is next to Meriones 'son of Ares, a wonder to mortals' (*IA* 201–2) and Nireus 'the most handsome of the Achaeans' (*IA* 204–5). Both these Homeric characters cut a rather splendid figure of heroic beauty, casting an inglorious shadow on Odysseus, who is given no physical description. Nireus is another obscure Homeric leader from the catalogue of ships. Uniquely, his name is repeated three times in the Homeric catalogue (*Il.* 2.671–3), in an entry which is 'quietly memorable',[86] and where he is designated as 'the most handsome man of all the Danaans who came beneath Ilion, after the blameless son of Peleus' (*Il.* 2.673–4). Sammons discusses the importance of the Nireus entry in the Homeric

[84] Stockert (1992) 268.
[85] Michelakis (2006) 44–6.
[86] Kirk (1985) 227.

catalogue, showing that one of its functions is to form a connection with the subsequent entry on Achilles.[87] In the *IA* too, reference to Nireus is followed by an extended description of Achilles racing against a chariot, which leads into the description of his ships.

Of the heroes identified on the beach, the ships of Achilles and the two Ajaxes form part of the catalogue. However, the absence of prominent Greek factions draws attention, by contrast, to the presence of the unknown Gouneus, which ties this catalogue to its Homeric model. Other adaptations from Homer seem purposely reappropriated for the new context. In the *Iliad* Agamemnon had led one hundred ships from Mycenae (*Il.* 2.576), and Menelaus sixty from Sparta (*Il.* 2.586–7). It is stressed that Menelaus' forces were marshalled apart from the others (*Il.* 2.587).[88] The *IA* makes them dual leaders, 'kinsman with kinsman' (*IA* 269: φίλος φίλῳ), of the same fleet of one hundred ships. This reflects the fact that the brothers in this play, although at odds, nevertheless function as an interdependent unit, exchanging ideological positions with each other simultaneously. First Agamemnon refuses to sacrifice Iphigenia and Menelaus insists that it must be done (*IA* 317–414). Later, when Menelaus pleads with Agamemnon not to carry out the sacrifice, Agamemnon responds that he has no choice but to go through with it (*IA* 471–542). The Athenians in the *IA* are now led not by Menestheus (*Il.* 2.552) but by a son of Theseus. He leads sixty ships (*IA* 248), ten more than his Homeric counterpart (*Il.* 2.556), and more than any other single commander in the Euripidean catalogue. So the importance of Athens is stressed for an Athenian audience. Similarly, the importance of Agamemnon as an individual is diminished. In Homer Agamemnon has 'the most numerous host' (*Il.* 2.580), but if he shares equal control over one hundred ships with his brother in Euripides, this implies that they control fifty each. So Agamemnon in the *IA* is a weaker individual with less power over the army than his Homeric counterpart. The final contingent led by Salaminian Ajax has twelve ships (*IA* 293) as in Homer (*Il.* 2.557), but is here placed in the pleasingly appropriate closing position to a catalogue of twelve naval squadrons.

In his recent study of Homeric catalogues, Benjamin Sammons argues persuasively that the catalogues are not extraneous to the main

[87] Sammons (2010) 161–2. [88] Sammons (2010) 140.

narrative, but are carefully constructed in order to reflect relevant and appropriate themes both within the immediate context of the catalogue and within the broader narrative of the epic. One feature of Homeric catalogues is that they can function as paradigms against which to judge particular characters or episodes in the epic.[89] In the case of the catalogue of ships, Sammons demonstrates that the catalogue has a 'double-view', which collapses time between the gathering of the fleet at Aulis and the immediate context of the ninth year of the war.[90] While the fleet being described is actually at Troy, and has been for nine years, the catalogue is evocative of their original mustering at Aulis in Boeotia, particularly since the Boeotians (who are relatively unimportant in the *Iliad*) feature most prominently at the beginning of the catalogue.[91] Sammons further illuminates the functions of several obscure figures in the catalogue. He shows, for example, how the entry of the relatively unknown Tlepolemos functions as an 'image within an image' of the workings of the catalogue itself, and how it relates to significant themes outside the catalogue.[92] Sammons identifies the entry of Achilles as a 'highly allusive synopsis of the *Iliad* itself'.[93] Such details, along with the catalogue's unusual invocation of the Muses, leads Sammons to conclude that 'the Catalogue of Ships engages in a discourse on poetry'.[94]

In the following discussion I take a similar approach in linking important elements from the Euripidean catalogue to their broader metapoetic context. I focus on the ekphrastic descriptions of four squadrons from the Euripidean catalogue, analysing both their connections with Homer and the appropriateness of the images to each leader and to the themes of marriage and violence, which are central to the *IA*.[95] The ships ekphrastically described are those of the key Iliadic players Achilles and Nestor, those of the Boeotians, who famously feature first in the Homeric catalogue, and those of the Athenians, who are obviously relevant to the theatre audience and the performance context. The ships of the Atreidae are not described, but the themes of marriage and vengeance are firmly present in this

[89] Sammons (2010). [90] Sammons (2010) 136–97.
[91] See Kirk (1985) 178–9. [92] Sammons (2010) 182.
[93] Sammons (2010) 186. [94] Sammons (2010) 195.
[95] On issues of marriage and violence in the *IA* see Foley (1985) 65–105, Rabinowitz (1993) 31–66, Michelakis (2006) 66–71.

entry since the ships are mustered 'so that Greece might exact retribution for the woman who fled from [Menelaus'] halls for the sake of barbarian marriage' (*IA* 270–2). The catalogue of ships is the second part of a *parodos*, which, as a whole, is remarkably reminiscent of a painted work of art in its ekphrastic composition, as Froma Zeitlin has shown.[96] Ekphrastic interpretation of the ships' emblems is prompted by their designation as *sēmata*, which, as in the case of the arms of Achilles in *Electra*, refer to 'signs' that must be deciphered. The paradigm of deciphering signs at Aulis may also be Homeric. In *Iliad* 2 Odysseus reminds the army of the 'great sign' (*Il.* 2.308 *mega sēma*) that appeared at Aulis in the form of a snake which consumed eight chicks, along with their mother as the ninth victim, and was then turned to stone by Zeus (*Il.* 2.308–20). Calchas interprets this as signalling Troy's fall in the tenth year (*Il.* 2.322–30). Similarly Nestor describes the lightning-bolts of Zeus as 'favourable signs' (*Il.* 2.351–3 *enaisima sēmata*) on the day they embarked on their ships.

The first ship-*sēma* to be described in the Euripidean catalogue is the 'emblem (*sēma*) of Achilles' army' (*IA* 241) which features golden images (*χρυσέαις δ' εἰκόσιν*) of the divine Nereids standing on the edges of the sterns (*IA* 239–41).[97] Gilded nautical emblems will have been familiar to an Athenian audience, whose own ships were decorated with gilded images of Athena, as discussed below. The image of fifty golden Nereids is also evocative of the description of dancing Nereids accompanying Achilles on his journey to Troy as described in the first *stasimon* of *Electra* (432–42).[98] The figure of a Nereid on the stern of a ship might well appear to be 'dancing' through the ship's movement across the seas, an artistic actualization of the image from the earlier Euripidean play. The Homeric ships of Achilles are also fifty in number (*Il.* 2.685), but the entry is tied to Achilles' absence as a leader since he is angry over the loss of Briseis in Book 1 (*Il.* 2.686–94).[99] In Euripides, by contrast, Achilles' presence has been stressed through the extended description of him racing

[96] Zeitlin (1994) 157–65.

[97] Allen (1901) 346 presumably misunderstands *εἴκοσιν* 'twenty' for *εἰκόσιν* 'images' when he says that Euripides 'adds the figure-head of twenty of the ships'.

[98] L has the ships of Achilles *πέμπουσαι χοροὺς μετὰ Νηρήδων* 'convoying dances with the Nereids', corrected by Diggle (1977) 111–12 to *πέμπουσαι χορεύματα Νηρήδων* 'convoying dances of the Nereids'.

[99] Sammons (2010) 187–92.

along the beach in his armour in the epode which immediately precedes the reference to his ships (*IA* 206–30). The swiftness of Achilles, who is able to keep pace with the chariot of Eumelus, is repeatedly emphasized. His ships are called *θούριαι* (*IA* 238), a tragic synonym for the Iliadic adjective *θοῦρις* meaning 'rushing', 'impetuous', 'furious' and commonly used in the formula *θοῦρις ἀλκή* 'furious valour'.[100] The ships of Achilles are 'furious' or 'rushing' in the sense that they are swift, but the epithet is appropriate to Achilles as a character in this play, who will demonstrate a sort of furious valour in single-handedly defending Iphigenia's life. The expression used to describe the force of the fleet is 'the Myrmidon Ares from Phthia' (*IA* 237: *Φθιώτας ὁ Μυρμιδὼν Ἄρης*). 'Ares' here is a metaphor for 'war-force' but, in juxtaposition with the 'furious ships', it evokes another common Iliadic formula, namely *θοῦρος Ἄρης* 'furious Ares'.[101] The description of the Myrmidon ships as a group reflects the individual qualities of an Iliadic Achilles: swift, furious, skilled in battle, and related to the Nereids as the son of the Nereid Thetis (cf. *IA* 208).

As daughters of the sea divinity Nereus 'who was raised in the watery waves' (*IA* 948–9) Nereids are eminently appropriate protectresses of sea vessels, but the individualistic connection between Achilles and the insignia imposed on his entire fleet anticipates his isolation from the Myrmidons later in the play, when they openly reject his plan to defend Iphigenia, and Achilles is alone in coming to her aid (*IA* 1346–60). The Nereids on the fifty ships are recalled in the real fifty Nereids who are said to have danced on the shore at the wedding of Thetis, the eldest among them (*IA* 1054–7), thus consolidating the specific connection between the Nereids and Achilles' ancestry, as does Achilles' oath invoking his grandfather Nereus as witness (*IA* 948–51). The marriage of Thetis to Peleus is celebrated by the chorus in the third *stasimon* as a joyous contrast to Iphigenia's 'marriage to death'. The wedding feast of Thetis and Peleus may be presented in the *IA* as a blessed occasion, but there is no escaping the tradition that Thetis was an unwilling bride, forced into marriage by the will of the gods, that Peleus had to struggle to win her hand, and

[100] e.g. *Iliad* 4.234, 4.418, 5.718, 6.112, 7.164, 8.174, 8.262, 11.287, 11.313, 11.566, 11.710, 12.409, 13.116, 13.197, 15.250. 15.322, 15.487, 15.527, 15.734, 16.270, 16.357, 17.81, 17.185, 18.157.

[101] e.g. *Iliad* 5.30, 5.35, 5.355, 5.454, 5.507, 5.830, 5.904, 15.127, 15.142, 21.406, 24.498.

that the couple did not remain together for long.[102] It is thematically relevant, then, that most of the Nereid nymphs remain unmarried and that Thetis' marriage was not a happy one. An immortal goddess subdued into marriage with a mortal provides an inverted analogue for the mortal Iphigenia's unavoidable marriage to the god Hades (cf. *IA* 540). The *sēmata* on the ships of Achilles evoke aspects of the Iliadic tradition in ways which speak to the characterization of Achilles in the *IA* and to its themes of violence and marriage.

In contrast to the ships of Achilles which each seem to bear the same emblem, it is only the leader of the Athenians whose ship is adorned. The 'son of Theseus' leads the Athenians (*IA* 248) as opposed to the figure Menestheus, son of Peteos, named in the *Iliad* (2.552) whose appearance there is 'somewhat mysterious' and whose 'role in the *Iliad* is inconspicuous, even undistinguished'.[103] Kirk points out the oddity of the absence of Theseus in the *Iliad*'s Athenian entry since '[t]he failure to mention Marathon, Aphidna, Eleusis and Thorikos . . . strongly suggests that synoecism (the incorporation of other towns and demes under Athens), credited in the mythical tradition to Theseus, is envisaged as already having taken place'.[104] Euripides follows the broader Cyclic tradition in referring to a son of Theseus as leader of the Athenians at Troy. Demophon is named in the *Little Iliad* (fr. 20 *PEG*), Acamas in the *Chrestomathia* account of the *Ilioupersis*.[105] The Athenian ship displays the patron goddess of Athens, Pallas Athena, seated in a chariot with winged horses (*IA* 249–51), a 'clear-symbolled apparition' (*eusēmon . . . phasma*) for sailors (*IA* 252). This would have been a familiar ensign of the Athenian fleet in the fifth century. Certainly Aristophanes' *Acharnians* mentions gilding images of Athena (547) as part of the preparations for a naval expedition.[106]

The language used here invites interpretation once more. The term φάσμα 'vision', 'apparition', is used several times in Euripides to designate dreams and other 'apparitions' which require interpretation.

[102] Thetis' forced marriage to Peleus is referred to in the *Cypria* fr. 2 (West), Pindar, *Isthmian* 8.26–57, cf. [Aeschylus] *PB* 757–70, 907–27; the Worse Argument in Aristophanes' *Clouds* jokes about why Thetis left Peleus (1067–70); Peleus' pursuit of Thetis in various forms was a popular subject in art, see Gantz (1993) 228–31.

[103] Kirk (1985) 206 with further references; cf. Sammons (2010) 171.

[104] Kirk (1985) 179.

[105] Gantz (1993) 283, 644–5.

[106] See Sommerstein (1992*b*) *ad* 547 and Olson (2002) *ad* 547.

In the *IT* Iphigenia's dreams are φάσματα 'apparitions' which she interprets (*IT* 42, 55; cf. 1263), just as Hecuba's dreams are also φάσματα 'apparitions' (*Hec.* 70). Two Euripidean heroines, Alcestis and Helen, are called φάσματα 'apparitions' as their husbands struggle to recognize them (*Alc.* 1127, *Hel.* 569). In *Ion* the recognition tokens are φάσματα 'apparitions' (*Ion* 1354) whose significance is explained by Creusa, while for Creusa Ion himself is the φάσμα 'apparition' whose riddling identity is finally revealed to her (*Ion* 1395).[107] In the case of the Athenian ship insignia, the φάσμα 'apparition' is specifically a sign for sailors to recognize and follow. As the virgin-warrior goddess, Athena is, through her very persona, associated with both violence and rejection of marriage. The figure of Athena in her flying chariot would have been very familiar for a primarily Athenian audience,[108] and the image is thematically appropriate to the major concerns of the play.[109]

The Boeotians are the next group whose ship emblems are described. The anomaly of their prominence in Homer (mentioned above) is not an issue in Euripides since the ships are gathered at Aulis in Boeotia, so that the importance of the Boeotians is geographically motivated. The first leader of the Boeotians mentioned in Homer, whose name opens the catalogue, is Leitos, also named in the *IA* as leader of this fleet (*Il.* 2.494, *IA* 259). As with many of the Homeric leaders mentioned in the catalogue, he is 'by no means conspicuous' in the rest of the poem,[110] and is otherwise obscure. Inclusion of an *ekphrasis* of Boeotian ships in the *IA* speaks to their immediate geographical relevance in a tragedy set at Aulis, but also draws attention to the Euripidean catalogue's intertextual relationship with its epic predecessor. With fifty ships, theirs is a smaller contingent than the Athenian one in the *IA*, which redresses the epic

[107] Cf. also E. *El.* 711 where the golden lamb represents φάσματα, here 'portents'.

[108] Athena takes her position on a blazing chariot at *Iliad* 5.745 and is often depicted on a chariot in archaic and classical Greek art, see *LIMC* II.2 pl. 174–9 with details provided by Pierre Demargne, *LIMC* II.1, 974. The association of Athena with a chariot also lies behind the ruse of Pisistratus (Hdt. 1.60). Similarly Athena regularly takes the form of a bird (or flies out like a bird) in Homer (*Il.* 7.58–9, *Od.* 1.319–20, 3.371–2, 22.239–40) and is often winged in archaic Greek art, see *LIMC* II.2 pl. 59–65 with accompanying information given by Pierre Demargne, *LIMC* II.1, 964–5.

[109] If the Byzantine interpolation is based on an original ending in which Iphigenia 'flies off' (*IA* 1608) when a deer is substituted in her stead, the image of Athena on her flying chariot emblematizes the outcome of the drama. On the problematic ending of the *IA*, see West (1981) 73–6.

[110] Kirk (1985) 190.

imbalance for an Athenian audience. While it seems unlikely that the Athenians tampered with the Homeric text representing their naval contingent, they were famously accused of doing so in order to bolster their claims to Salamis in the sixth century BC, demonstrating that the details of the catalogue of ships were well studied and familiar in the classical period.[111]

The images on the Boeotian ships are very much evocative of the subject matter of Athenian tragedy, namely the house of Thebes whose destruction was dramatized in (among other tragedies) the *Bacchae*, which accompanied the *IA* along with the lost *Alcmaeon in Corinth* in the original production.[112] The ships are 'decorated with *sēmeia*', a synomyn for *sēmata* (*IA* 255: σημείοισιν ἐστολισμένας), in the now familiar pattern inviting interpretation through the language of 'signs'. 'On the uppermost point of their ships was Cadmus holding the golden serpent' (*IA* 256–8: τοῖς δὲ Κάδμος ἦν | χρύσεον δράκοντ' ἔχων | ἀμφὶ ναῶν κόρυμβα). This represents the foundation myth of Thebes in which Cadmus slew the sacred serpent of Ares, a scene commonly depicted on Greek vases.[113] After the conquest, Cadmus had sown the serpent's teeth into the earth, from which sprang forth fully armed men, the ancestors of the Thebans (E. *Pho.* 657–75). The chorus's identification of the leader of the Boeotian contingent as 'earthborn' (*IA* 259: γηγενής) invites the audience to make the connection between the image of Cadmus and the serpent and the broader details of the Theban foundation myth. In effect, the audience is invited to complete the narrative suggested by the emblem, and this narrative too is thematically relevant to the play. In the Theban tradition also, marriage and violence are connected since it is only after slaying the serpent of Ares that Cadmus receives Harmonia, daughter of Ares and Aphrodite as wife.[114] Pindar compared the fate of Peleus, married to Thetis, to that of Cadmus, married to Harmonia (*Pythian* 3.86–107). They may have

[111] The story is referred to in Aristotle, *Rhetoric* 1.15.13; see further Kirk (1985) 180, 208–9.

[112] Of the extant tragedies, disasters at Thebes also occur in Aeschylus' *Seven Against Thebes*, Sophocles' *Antigone, Oedipus the King, Oedipus at Colonus*, Euripides' *Heracles* and *Phoenician Women*.

[113] *LIMC* V.2 pl. 14–26, with details by Michalis A. Tiverios *LIMC* V.1, 867–9.

[114] The exact reason for Cadmus' being honoured with Harmonia as wife is unclear, though it seems to have been part of a reconciliation with Ares as discussed by Gantz (1993) 467–73.

been mortals blessed with immortal wives, but they were also fated to engender races plagued by grief, Peleus and Thetis as parents of Achilles and grandparents of Neoptolemus, both of whom die young leaving no true heirs (cf. *Andromache* 1177–8), Cadmus and Harmonia through their Theban progeny. If the *IA* was performed first in the trilogy, the audience would later see Cadmus' devastation on stage in the *Bacchae*.[115] In any case, the mythic implications of the Cadmean foundation of Thebes reflect on Iphigenia's fate, since she too is part of a family whose kindred violence will cause its collapse.

The final description of a naval symbol, and arguably the most symbolically important, is that of Nestor from Pylos. His ship depicts 'a bull-footed *sēma*, his neighbour Alpheus' (*IA* 275–6: *σῆμα ταυρόπουν . . .* | *τὸν πάροικον Ἀλφεόν*), the divine personification of the Alpheus river. This reconfigures a geographical detail from the Homeric catalogue where those who dwell around the crossing of the Alpheus are part of Nestor's squadron (*Il.* 2.592), and Nestor himself is designated by the Homeric epithet 'Gerenian' in the Euripidean catalogue (*IA* 274, cf. *Il.* 2.601). As the personification of the largest river in the Peloponnese, which rose in Arcadia and flowed out into the Ionian sea, Alpheus is an appropriate nautical emblem for the Peloponnesian king. The *hapax legomenon* *ταυρόπουν* 'bull-footed' is evocative of animalistic aggression, and images of ships in Greek art sometimes depict a ship's prow in the shape of an aggressive animal.[116] The aggression of the 'bull-footed' personified river, however, evokes a specifically erotic context. In Sophocles the river Achelous courted Deianeira in bull form and as a man with a bull's head (*Trach.* 11–13, 509), and he is often depicted as part man part beast in ancient Greek art.[117] The object of Alpheus' erotic pursuits was the nymph Arethusa, who fled his amorous advances and was shrouded by Artemis in a cloud from which she became covered in a

[115] The dawn setting of the *IA* suggests that it was produced earliest in the day; cf. Michelakis (2006) 85.

[116] A seal stone dating from *c.*500 BC, housed in the New York Metropolitan Museum of Art, depicts the stern of a ship shaped like a boar with protruding tusks, and is similar iconographically to the ship of Dionysus on an Attic black-figure kylix by Exekias, dated 550–530 BC (Munich, Antikensammlungen, 2044). There the ship's prow is shaped like a boar, but without the tusks. See Spathari (1995) pl. 113, p. 99 and pl. 107, p. 97, respectively.

[117] Numerous images are recorded at *LIMC* I.2, 19–54, with discussion by Hans Peter Islar *LIMC* I.1, 12–36.

cold and drenching sweat and metamorphosed into a river. These details survive in Ovid (*Met.* 5.572–641), but the myth of Arethusa and Alpheus is alluded to in Pindar (*Nemean* 1.1),[118] and it seems that the figure of Alpheus may have become popular in the second quarter of the fifth century BC.[119] The name Arethusa had been mentioned earlier in the *parodos* of the *IA*, when the chorus had identified their homeland as Chalcis 'nurse of the seaside waters of the *famous* Arethusa' (*IA* 169–70: *ἀγχιάλων ὑδάτων τροφὸν | τᾶς κλεινᾶς Ἀρεθούσας*). This Arethusa is the river in north-eastern Greece rather than the homonymous spring at Syracuse in Sicily, named after the nymph pursued by Alpheus. Nevertheless, the designation of Arethusa as 'famous' might well trigger a recollection of the arguably more famous Arethusa. Certainly, reference to Alpheus constitutes one more allusion to an unwelcome courtship contextualizing the conflated 'marriage/sacrifice' of Iphigenia.

It seems important that this final *sēma* is described through the ekphrastic formula 'a wonder to behold' (*IA* 1581: *θαῦμα δ' ἦν . . . ὁρᾶν*), concluding a series of *ekphraseis* with a marker inviting interpretation of a visual sign.[120] Of the leaders whose ships are the subject of *ekphraseis*, only Achilles is a major figure in the drama. However, the *sēmata* are in each case appropriately tied to the tragedy's central concerns in depicting symbols of marriage rejected or courtships marred by violence. The catalogue's intertextual relationship with Homer anchors these themes appropriately to the identities of the leaders, anchors the leaders in turn within the epic tradition. The river Alpheus in the case of Nestor, the leader Leitus in the case of the Boeotians, the individuality of Achilles in the case of the Myrmidons, all position the ships' *ekphraseis* as an engaged response to Homer. The Athenians stand out as being related to the broader epic cycle, but all four *ekphraseis* evoke familiar images from classical art for a contemporary audience.

[118] See Race (1997) ii. 5 n. 1.

[119] The earliest surviving artistic representation of Alpheus dates from this period, a headless marble statue which would have belonged to the east pediment of the temple of Zeus at Olympia. Olga Palagia, *LIMC* I.1, 577 (with *LIMC* I.2, pl. 8) gives further details.

[120] See Becker (1995) 35 on the force of the expression 'a wonder to behold', 34–7 on the Hesiodic Shield of Heracles, and 128–30 on the Shield of Achilles in the *Iliad*.

Rewriting Aeschylean *Ekphrasis* in *Phoenician Women*

Euripides' *Phoenician Women*, like his *Electra*, treats the same specific mythological episode as did Aeschylus in one of his plays, in this case Aeschylus' *Seven Against Thebes*. These tragedies dramatize the attack on Thebes by the exiled prince Polynices with six other champions and their armies mustered under Argive leadership. The Aeschylean version contains extended *ekphraseis* describing the shield emblems of the attacking warriors. Euripides rewrites these *ekphraseis* by transforming Aeschylean images into actual characters or events and by inscribing Aeschylean characters or their attributes into his own shield *ekphraseis*. Most of these transformations occur in the *teichoskopia* of Antigone (*Pho.* 88–201) and in the Messenger speech reporting the deaths of the attackers (*Pho.* 1090–1199). The authenticity of the *teichoskopia* is not doubted by recent editors.[121] Diggle and Kovacs suspect interpolation in the Messenger speech at 1104–40 where the shields of the fallen warriors are described,[122] but Craik retains this section almost in its entirety and the authenticity of these lines has been staunchly defended by the play's most serious editor, Donald Mastronarde.[123] Mastronarde's 1978 *Phoenix* article demonstrated systematically how arguments for the deletion of *Pho.* 1104–40 are all weak or refutable. One argument for deletion is that the scene is too similar to Aeschylus, and I would agree with Mastronarde that it is rather the variation on the Aeschylean source which is noteworthy.[124] In discussing Euripides' *Phoenician Women*, then, I follow the text of Mastronarde, but demonstrate also that this play's intertextual engagement with Aeschylus is present throughout and is not simply restricted to the Messenger speech.[125]

[121] Craik (1988) suspects no interpolation between *Pho.* 88 and 210, Mastronarde (1994) deletes only 141–4, Diggle (1994) and Kovacs (2002*c*) both retain all of the *teichoskopia* except 118, 122–3, 132, 141–4. See also Burgess (1987) for a defence of the *teichoskopia*.

[122] Diggle (1994) and Kovacs (2002*c*) delete all of 1104–40.

[123] Craik (1988) suspects 116–17, 1116–18, and 1136, Mastronarde (1994) deletes only 1136. Mastronarde (1994) is the most comprehensive recent edition of this play, and he has previously published an edition with Teubner (1988) and co-authored a significant study of the drama's textual tradition with Jan Bremer in 1982.

[124] Mastronarde (1978) 116–17.

[125] Lamari (2010) 205–7 follows Mastronarde, for the most part, in her narratological study of *Phoenician Women*.

Already in the prologue, Jocasta reveals that Oedipus had cursed his sons to divide their inheritance *θηκτῷ σιδήρῳ* 'with whetted iron' (*Pho.* 68). The expression is precisely that used at *Seven* 944 in that play's final reference to the iron that divided the brothers' inheritance—*θηκτὸς σίδαρος* 'whetted iron'. The image is crucially important in Aeschylus because this iron is revealed as being the cryptic 'Scythian stranger' prophesied to divide the inheritance of the brothers, i.e. through their mutual slaughter.[126] The phrase occurs in the first position of the line in both cases and is the only instance of the term *θηκτός* in extant Aeschylus.[127] As is typical of several instances of Euripidean allusion to Aeschylus, an obscure or complex Aeschylean issue is presented in clarified form (cf. *Frogs* 923–79). In Euripides, the curse of Oedipus and the way it will be effected are unambiguous. Aeschylean language is further evoked in the prologue through the concept of acting *δαιμόνων βίᾳ* 'in defiance of the gods' (*Pho.* 18). Laius is said to have acted thus in disobeying Apollo's command not to produce offspring (cf. *Pho.* 868) just as he acted *Ἀπόλλωνος . . .| βίᾳ* 'in defiance of Apollo' in Aeschylus (*Seven* 745–6). Defying the gods is a dangerous activity and it is not surprising that the expression seems to be rare in tragedy.[128] Euripides alludes to Aeschylus not only through the common denominator of Laius' deliberate defiance of the gods (which does

[126] *Seven* 710–11, 727–33, 816–19, 906–14, 941–50 with Torrance (2007) 12–13 and 62. As a metal believed to have been first forged in Scythia, Scythian iron is ultimately the harsh resolver of familial and civic strife between the brothers Eteocles and Polynices.

[127] The term does not occur in Sophocles. Euripides uses it several times—*Medea* 40 and 379, *Ion* 1064, *Cresphontes* fr. 453.12, cf. [*Rhesus*] 669—but only of iron at *Pho.* 68 and *Cresphontes* fr. 453.12. Mastronade (1994) *ad* 350 has noted the importance of iron as a motif in *Phoenician Women* and *Seven*.

[128] In several manuscripts (M I *b k*), *Seven* lines 531–2 refer to Parthenopaeus sacking the city *βίᾳ Διός* 'in defiance of Zeus'. The expression used at *IA* 702 is abortive. Clytemnestra asks Agamemnon if Peleus married Thetis *βίᾳ θεῶν* 'in defiance of the gods', but the answer is essentially 'No' since Zeus approved the union. I have found no other examples of this precise expression used in connection with the gods. In the context of the war on Thebes, compare E. *Supp.* 158 where Adrastus says *ἦλθον Ἀμφιάρεώ γε πρὸς βίαν* 'I went [against Thebes] in defiance of Amphiaraus' and E. *Supp.* 231 where Theseus reproaches Adrastus saying *βίᾳ παρελθὼν θεοὺς ἀπώλεσας πόλιν* 'you went against the gods *with violence* and destroyed your city'. Other examples of the phrase *βίᾳ* + genitive meaning 'in defiance of' include references to defiance of the laws (S. *Ant.* 59), of the citizens (S. *Ant.* 79, 907), of allies or friends (S. *OC* 815, 854) of one's better judgment (A. *Seven* 612).

not feature in Sophocles), but also through the textual expression used to convey this fact.[129]

In the *teichoskopia*, on seeing the vastness of the army, Antigone expresses anxiety about the security of the gates (*Pho.* 114–16), to which the Tutor responds (*Pho.* 117) *θάρσει· τά γ' ἔνδον ἀσφαλῶς ἔχει πόλις* 'Don't worry! The city is safe internally, at least'. This is a striking inversion of the Aeschylean Eteocles' reproach to the young chorus maidens at *Seven* 194: *αὐτοὶ δ' ὑπ' αὐτῶν ἔνδοθεν πορθούμεθα* 'we are being sacked by ourselves from within'.[130] Eteocles' words are unsettling and I have argued elsewhere that his behaviour towards the chorus is excessive and casts him in an unsympathetic light.[131] Euripides' reversal of the perception of the city's safety is further underlined by his use of light and dark imagery. The *teichoskopia* presents a dazzling display of brightness.[132] The drama will subsequently develop its imagery of darkness, but the opening description of the light overturns the presence of night and darkness found in the gathering of Aeschylus' attackers in *Seven* (29, 43).[133] Where in Aeschylus the death of the brothers is a necessary evil if Thebes is to be saved, in Euripides the civil war is more explicitly motivated by lust for tyrannical power of a kind abhorrent to fifth-century Athenian democratic ideals. Peter Burian has recently analysed the themes of city and family, and gender relations in *Phoenician Women*, confirming that even thematically 'we cannot fully understand [the play's] workings without considering it as a response to Aeschylus' famous tragedy'.[134]

[129] Foley (1985) 115–32 notes some structural similarities and contrasts Euripides' *Pho.* and Aeschylus' *Seven*. In particular, at 115–16, she underlines the importance of family stressed in Jocasta's prologue, a striking contrast to Eteocles' avoidance of familial references in his own prologue speech in *Seven*, on which see also Torrance (2007) 27–9.

[130] Some of the similarities between Antigone in *Pho.* and the chorus in *Seven* are observed in Foley (1985) 117–19, 138–40. See also Goldhill (2007*a*) 139 on the irony of *Pho.* 117.

[131] Torrance (2007) 94–106, and see also Stehle (2005).

[132] On the brightness of the scene described in the *teichoskopia*, see Podlecki (1962) 357–8. The Messenger speech at 1090–1199 is also developed as a spectacle in which the Messenger is an instrument of vision, cf. De Jong (1991) 10 and n. 21.

[133] On the light–dark imagery as a major unifying force in *Phoenician Women*, see Podlecki (1962) 358–62.

[134] Burian (2009) 17.

Eponymy and Etymology

The most striking of Euripidean inversions, however, is the positive characterization of Polynices, who is a 'famous force', according to the prologue (*Pho.* 56). Throughout Greek poetry much significance is associated with eponymy 'appropriate naming' and etymological significance.[135] In Aeschylus, the meaning of Polynices' name as 'Much-strife' (from *polu* + *neikos*) is underlined. Amphiaraus, who opposes the expedition, is said to dwell on Polynices' name (*Seven* 576–8). Eteocles suggests that Polynices is *epōnymos* 'appropriately named' when he realizes that he will be fighting his brother (*Seven* 658).[136] The chorus express how the brothers died in accordance with eponymy, i.e. in a manner appropriate to their names (*Seven* 828–31). In Euripides, the brothers are first mentioned as *Ἐτεοκλέα κλεινήν τε Πολυνείκους βίαν* 'Eteocles and the famous force of Polynices' (*Pho.* 56). *Kleinēn* 'famous' is applied to Polynices although it directly evokes Eteo*klēs* (meaning 'True-fame') and is positioned in such a way as to maximize the impact of that assonance. Indeed the phrase *Eteoklea kleinēn te* is somewhat palindromic and seems mimologically charged. Eteocles' name is mimologically motivated through the suggestion that the word 'Eteocles' reflects (or imitates) the thing 'True fame'. This motivation is aggressively undermined when 'True fame' is deracinated from its eponymous association Eteo*klēs* ('True fame') and used to designate Polynices.[137] The effect is unsettling, and the expression 'famous force' seems itself designed to remind us of the Aeschylean shield scene in which this language is used.[138] How is

[135] On the significance of proper names in literature more generally see Barthes (1974) 94–5.

[136] Zeitlin (2009) 96 suggests that Eteocles in *Seven* 'confirms the eponymy of Polyneikes' name (full of strife, 658) and, by his own refusal to weep, refuses the potential "*klaíō*" of lamentation that lurks behind the negative meaning of his own name'.

[137] *Mimologism* is a term coined by Genette (1995) 5 to describe 'a relation of reflective analogy (imitation) between "word" and "thing" that *motivates*, or justifies, the existence and choice of the former.' The term is proposed as a synonym for *Cratylism*. Genette (1995) 7–27 usefully employs the term 'eponymies' rather than 'etymologies' to discuss the theories of names and their significance in Plato's *Cratylus*.

[138] Mastronarde (1994) *ad Pho.* 56 observes that the epic expression *βίᾱ* + genitive, denoting a warrior's strength, is not employed elsewhere by Euripides, but it *is* used multiple times in Aeschylus' *Seven*, twice referring to Polynices in the same end of line position (*Seven* 577, 641; cf. also *Seven* 448, 569, 571, 620).

Polynices 'famous' in a tragic context, if not from Aeschylus' *Seven Against Thebes*?

Euripides startles his audience with the implication (developed as the play progresses) that his Polynices is the more sympathetic brother.[139] At *Pho.* 56 Eteocles receives no epithet at all. Later in the drama, however, Euripides twice draws attention to the meaning of Polynices as 'Much-strife'. Eteocles calls him *νεικέων ἐπώνυμον* 'appropriately named (*epōnymos*) for strife' in the closing lines of the first episode (*Pho.* 636–7) and Antigone laments in the drama's *exodos* that he was *epōnymos* 'aptly named' (*Pho.* 1493). That he is presented as a sympathetic character and is nevertheless perceived as being appropriately named (especially by Antigone, his great supporter) points to a potential ambiguity in the meaning of Polynices' name similar to that which scholars have observed for Odysseus. Derived from the verb *odysasthai* which encompasses a range of meanings including 'to be angry' and 'to vex', the name Odysseus implies both troubles inflicted and troubles endured.[140] In theoretical terms the name 'Odysseus' as signifier produces more than one signified (meaning),[141] but both meanings are *appropriate* to their owner. In Euripides, Polynices is revealed as being the *endurer* of much strife and the ambiguity in the meaning of his name becomes clear.

In fact the concept of a name or word holding a variety of different meanings for different people is raised by Eteocles (ironically) in his exchange with Polynices earlier in the scene which ends with him emphasizing the meaning of Polynices' name. At *Pho.* 501–2 he says *νῦν δ' οὔθ' ὅμοιον οὐδὲν οὔτ' ἴσον βροτοῖς | πλὴν ὀνόμασιν· τὸ δ' ἔργον*

[139] Cf. *Pho.* 257–442, 511, 690–783 with Mastronarde (1994) 27–9 and comments *ad loc.*

[140] This is the formulation of Clay (1983) 56. *Odyssey* 19.405–12 explains how Odysseus came to get his name, and cf. S. fr. 965 where Odysseus says: *ὀρθῶς δ' Ὀδυσσεύς εἰμ' ἐπώνυμος κακῶν | πολλοὶ γὰρ ὠδύσαντο δυσμενεῖς ἐμοί* 'Rightly, for evils, I am *epōnymos* Odysseus; for many enemies have hated me'. On the meaning of Odysseus' name see e.g. Austin (1972), Clay (1983) 54–68, Dimock (1962), Goldhill (1991) 24–36, Stanford (1952). Other names are also significant in Homer, of course. See further Sulzberger (1926).

[141] The terms are those developed from Saussure's linguistic theory of signification, see Saussure (1983) 65–105. On linguistic devices which have one signifier but a 'plethora of signifieds' see e.g. Dällenbach (1989) 44. Cf. also Altena (2000) who applies the concept that 'all verbal and visual signs are in principle polyfunctional' (308) to an analysis of significant actions in *Phoenician Women*.

οὐκ ἔστιν τόδε. This is a densely expressed sentiment and a difficult passage to translate. Kovacs's rendition makes the clearest sense: 'As things stand, the only similarity or equality mortals show is in their use of words: the reality to which these refer is not the same'.[142] Eteocles' point is that words and names, both encompassed by ὀνόμασιν, are open to interpretation. What seems just to Polynices, he suggests, is not just to him. Eteocles' moral position is extremely weak. He is a perjurer, having broken his oath to alternate power with Polynices (*Pho.* 481–2), and he rejects Polynices' sworn offer to withdraw the army if alternate ruling can be established as originally agreed (*Pho.* 484–93). In contrast to Polynices and Jocasta, who appeal to universal values, Eteocles' gnomic statements are associated specifically with personal beliefs and contribute to his negative portrayal.[143] Eteocles wants to maintain sole control of the kingdom and its wealth, but Jocasta uses his theory of naming against him in arguing that wealth is ephemeral (*Pho.* 558). She questions Eteocles' attitude to material wealth asking (*Pho.* 553) τί δ' ἔστι τὸ πλέον; ὄνομ' ἔχει μόνον 'What is the advantage? It is an advantage in name only.'

This issue of appropriate naming in a general sense, encompassing both proper and abstract nouns, is important in Euripidean drama. Matthew Wright has shown how Euripides' 'escape-tragedies' raise questions about accepted terms and their associated meanings.[144] Phaedra in *Hippolytus* observes that there are two kinds of *aidōs*, a term which means both 'shame' and 'modesty'. One is appropriate, the other inappropriate (*Hipp.* 386–7).[145] Moreover, Euripides often marks actual or newly imagined etymological associations of proper names in many of his dramas. In *Trojan Women* 989–90 it is implied that Aphrodite's name is derived from *aphrosyne* 'witlessness' in contrast to her traditional association with the *aphros* 'foam' from which she was said to have been born. In *Ion*, the title character is so-called first because he was *iōn* 'coming out' of the temple, with the true significance of the name revealed when he is destined to give his name to the Ionian people (*Ion* 661, 1588). At *Suppliants* 496–7 the phrase *Kapaneōs . . . demas kapnoutai* 'the body of Capaneus is smoking' implies an etymological link between Capaneus and the smoke (*kapnos*) of Zeus' thunderbolt which destroys him.

[142] Kovacs (2002*c*) 261–3.
[143] Lamari (2010) 63–6.
[144] Wright (2005) 226–337, esp. 310–16 on names.
[145] Cf. W. Barrett (1964) *ad loc.*

Hippomedon is associated with horses (*hippoi*, *Supp.* 886), and Parthenopaeus is called a *pais* 'child' (*Supp.* 889). In *Helen* the barbarian king is Theoclymenus 'Called divine' and notably *called* divine because he is actually rather unpleasant and lacks the divine insight of this sister.[146] This sympathetic sister also has a significant name Theonoe 'Divine perception', a name whose appropriateness is proved when her divine foresight helps Helen and Menelaus to escape. In *Bacchae*, Pentheus 'Sorrower' is named for *penthos* 'sorrow' (*Ba.* 367, cf. 507–8). In *IA* there is a pun on the name Atreus as if it implied 'fearless' from *a-* negating *treō* 'fear' (*IA* 321). In *Meleager* fr. 517 Meleagros is connected etymologically with *melean . . . agran* 'an ill-fated hunt'. *Antiope* frr. 181–2 explain the names of Zēthus and Amphiōn, the former because his mother 'sought' *ezētēse* a comfortable place to give birth, the latter because he was born *amphi hodon* 'beside the road'. At *Phaethon* 224–5 it is implied that *Apollōn* 'Apollo' is *apollōn* 'destroying', an etymological association also exploited in Aeschylus (*Ag.* 1080–2).[147] Alexandros is given this name (in addition to Paris) because he protected (*alexēsas*) the flocks (*Alexandros* fr. 42d). Melannipe's son Boeotus is connected with oxen (*bous*) in *Captive Melannipe* (fr. *489). In a fragment of disputed authenticity, attributed to Euripides' *Danae*, the title character is so named by her father because a long time had passed before the birth of his child (fr. 1132.20–1), a play on the Greek *dān* 'a long time'. In *Rhesus* too we find an example of etymological naming at 158–9, where Dolon's name is implicitly connected with *dolos* 'trick'. Euripides' tendency to provide etymologies is parodied in Aristophanes' *Lemnian Women* fr. 373 where Thoas 'Swift one' (Hypsipyle's father) is described as 'the slowest at running among all mankind', reversing the explicit connection made between the Euripidean Thoas (the barbarian king in *IT*) and swift-footedness (*IT* 32–3).[148]

[146] On the stereotypically barbarian qualities of Theoclymenus see Hall (1989) 113, 126. Like Thoas at the end of the *IT*, though, Theoclymenus does abandon his plans for aggression in response to a divine command.

[147] Euripides' *Phaethon* dramatized the same mythological episode as Aeschylus' *Daughters of the Sun* (*Heliades*), but too little survives of the Aeschylean drama to say how Euripides responded to it.

[148] The epithet 'swift-footed' famously belonged to the Homeric Achilles, who is said to be living on the White Island in the Black Sea in this play (*IT* 435–8), a reference to the fact that Achilles was worshipped by Greeks who colonized the Black Sea area from Asia Minor from the late 7th cent. BC, with Iphigenia as his queen in

Aeschylus also emphasizes etymological links between names and their meanings in all of his extant plays, though Sophocles does so less frequently.[149] In Euripides' *Phoenician Women*, there is an important connection between appropriate naming and appropriate *ekphraseis* which exists in a complex intertextual relationship with Aeschylus. *Seven Against Thebes* itself links the appropriateness of ekphrastic shield devices with the appropriateness of names. The term *epōnymos*, favoured by Aeschylus, occurs in its greatest concentration in this play (*Seven* 9, 135, 405, 536, 658, 829; cf. 670, 888).[150] Eteocles prays (*Seven* 9) that Zeus the Defender be 'true to his name' (i.e. and defend Thebes). The chorus (*Seven* 135–7) entreat Ares to watch over the 'significantly named' city of the Cadmeans (referring to Ares' connections with the city).[151] At *Seven* 403–6 Eteocles hopes that the symbol of Night on Tydeus' shield be 'true to her name' and bring him the night of death; he trusts also (at *Seven* 670–1) that Justice would be utterly false to her name if she sided with Polynices. In *Seven*, names almost universally turn out to be appropriate—Thebes is saved, Tydeus and Polynices die. Nevertheless, there is also a hint that names have the potential to be deceptive or ambiguous. The Aeschylean Parthenopaeus 'has a savage disposition and is *not* appropriately named as maidenish' (*Seven* 536–7: *ὁ δ' ὠμόν, οὔ τι παρθένων ἐπώνυμον | φρόνημα*). His name is 'maidenish' because it derives from *parthenos* 'maiden' and possibly

some versions. Hommel (1980) discusses these issues and suggests (35–6) that Thoas functions as a doublet of Achilles.

[149] See Kranz (1933) 287–9 for a complete list of the etymological passages in Aeschylus. Sophoclean tragedy has fewer examples of etymological word-play. Notably, his *Aias* 'Ajax' makes the connection between his name and the sounds *aiai* made in lamentation (*Ajax* 430–1). Perhaps there is an irony at S. *El.* 962 where Electra rebukes Chrysothemis for lamenting that she is ageing *alektra* 'without a marriage bed'. Knox (1979) 96–111, esp. 99–100, discusses Sophocles' play on the name of Oedipus.

[150] A. *Supp.* and *Eum.* both contain three occurrences of the term *Supp.* 45, 252, 315, *Eum.* 90, 418, 689; cf. *PB* 300, 733, 850 and *Cho.* 190. Sophocles uses the term less frequently: *Ajax* 430, 574, *OC* 65, 1321 (though not applied to Polynices), *OT* 210, *Kamikoi* fr. 323.1, cf. fr. 916, fr. 941.2, fr. 965.1. In addition to *Pho.* 637, 1493–4 (cf. 769), Euripidean usage of the term occurs at *Ion* 1555, 1577, 1594, *Or.* 1008, 1646, *El.* 1275, *IT* 1454, *Antiope* fr. 223.77, *Melanippe the Wise* fr. 481.6, *Telephus* fr. 696, cf. [*Rhesus*] 158. Morin (2001) 51–2 also notes the importance of the term *epōnymos* in *Seven*.

[151] Ares has two claims to link him with the Cadmean city: his daughter Harmonia was given as wife to Cadmus, and the Sown men who co-founded the city with Cadmus were sprung from the teeth of Ares' sacred serpent. See Gantz (1993) 467–73.

also from *pais* 'child', a connection stressed by Euripides in his *Suppliants* through the phrase *pais Parthenopaios* 'the child Parthenopaeus' (*Supp.* 889). In Aeschylus the portrayal of Parthenopaeus as savage and arrogant suggests that his name is not true to its meaning.[152] His ferocity and savagery are established over twenty-one lines (*Seven* 526–46) with his name suppressed until the impact of the description is complete (his name is revealed at *Seven* 547).

In Euripides, however, Parthenopaeus' name is revealed immediately and he is simultaneously defined by association with his mother Atalanta (*Pho.* 150), who is depicted on his shield (discussed below). Parthenopaeus' death is also described in terms of his failing to get back to his mother (*Pho.* 1161–2).[153] The meaning of his name thus appears to be *more appropriate* to his person in Euripides. The examination of names and their meanings is also an investigation into mythology and its construction. Lamari has recently linked the suicide of Menoeceus in *Phoenician Women* (a probable Euripidean innovation) with the connotations of his name as meaning one who 'stays' (*menei*) in the 'house' (*oikos*).[154] The issue of naming in this play is thematically anchored to the etymology of Polynices' name. Although the name's negativity seems to have been a cornerstone of this mythic episode,[155] Euripides explores possibilities of ambiguity in order to create his own fictional characters, characters who are in dialogue with, though radically different from, those of Aeschylus.[156]

Naming the Attackers

'It would be a great waste of time to name each of the enemy, stationed as they are under our very walls' (*Pho.* 751–2). So Euripides'

[152] Zeitlin (2009) 96–7 notes that *Dikē* 'Justice' is called the *pais parthenos* 'maiden child' of Zeus by Eteocles at *Seven* 662 in the complex system of language reversal developed in the play, which further confirms that Parthenopaeus is not appropriately named.

[153] On the pathos of this expression and the aptness of the bereaved parent motif to the figure of Parthenopaeus, see De Jong (1991) 78.

[154] Lamari (2010) 88.

[155] Hutchinson (1985) notes *ad Seven* 830: 'In origin . . . the name *Πολυνείκης*, insulting but not jocular, is likely to have been coined for this story.'

[156] Polynices in Sophocles' *OC* (which post-dates *Pho.*) is also a highly unpleasant character whom Oedipus resembles in certain ways; see Rehm (2004) 49–51 and cf. Easterling (1967) who argues that Oedipus' curse on Polynices in *OC*, though appalling, is nevertheless psychologically plausible.

Eteocles addresses Creon as he prepares for battle. Many scholars have acknowledged in these lines an intertextual allusion to Aeschylus' *Seven* where roughly one-third of the play (*Seven* 375–652) is dedicated to the naming of champions and an ekphrastic description of the shield symbol of each.[157] Euripides' *Suppliants* contains a similar expression, where Theseus, for fear of being laughed at, refrains from asking Adrastus which of the warriors encountered which at Thebes, since such details are impossible to observe in the thick of battle (846–56). That passage has also been read as a reaction to Aeschylus' *Seven*, or alternatively to his *Eleusinians*. There has been some disagreement, however, on the purpose of the allusion. In the case of *Suppliants*, Collard argues that this is not necessarily a 'disingenuous sneer' at Aeschylus.[158] Similarly in the case of *Phoenician Women*, Mastronarde rightly finds the alternatives of tribute or ridicule 'overdrawn' and suggests quite reasonably that the allusion is designed to show 'Et[eocles]'s impatience with further details of military planning'.[159] Christine Amiech notes the irony of Eteocles' statement in light of the fact that he has just wasted a lot of time grasping Creon's military strategy, the same strategy employed by the Eteocles of *Seven*.[160] Anna Lamari similarly stresses that 'Euripides' Eteocles is hesitant and frightened',[161] but later falls back on the polarized options, which recent commentators have avoided, when she states that 'the allusion to the *Seven* is either polite homage to Aeschylus, or an obvious rejection of Aeschylean technique'.[162] If we look to another Euripidean play, *Orestes*, we would seem to find validation for long speeches which are said to be preferable and clearer to listen to than short ones (*Or.* 640–1), where Orestes pleads his case before Menelaus, a Spartan, whose people were stereotyped for their brevity of expression. What is evident in *Phoenician Women* is that the audience is asked to compare Eteocles

[157] It might perhaps also allude to the *Iliad* 3 *teichoskopia*, set in the tenth year of the war and so rather late in the game to be describing the Greek warriors.

[158] Collard (1975) *ad* 846–56.

[159] Mastronarde (1994) *ad* 751–2.

[160] Amiech (2004) *ad* 751. One might add that Euripides very much explores delayed action and delayed entrances and exits in his own *Pho.*, as discussed by Saïd (1985) 518–26. The *exodos*, for example, 'n'en finit pas de finir' as Saïd puts it at 519–20. This makes it even less likely that he intended to 'criticize' Aeschylus' shield-scene for being lengthy and unrealistic.

[161] Lamari (2010) 79.

[162] Lamari (2010) 153.

with his Aeschylean counterpart. The meticulous military strategist of Aeschylus, who assigns defenders in semiotically and hermeneutically appropriate ways, based on the reported shield *ekphraseis*, has become a flimsy ineffectual leader who must rely on Creon for military advice. The contrast underlines Euripides' unequivocally negative characterization of Eteocles, and his associated positive characterization of Polynices.

In fact, the naming of the attackers and the shield *ekphraseis are* significant issues in *Phoenician Women*. Antigone's question in the *teichoskopia* τίς ὀνομάζεται; 'What is his name?', pointing out Hippomedon (*Pho.* 124), is also inspired by the Iliadic *teichoskopia* where Priam asks Helen to 'name' the warriors she sees from the city wall (*Iliad* 3. 165: ἐξονομήνῃς). The structural model here is Homeric, although the positions of inquisitor and respondent are reversed, with the young female (Antigone) eliciting responses from the older man (the Tutor).[163] Goldhill has suggested that the off-stage presence of the often-mentioned city walls in *Seven* is also an important model to which Euripides responds in his *Phoenician Women*.[164] Certainly, the Aeschylean model is extremely significant for the exploration of the attackers' identities and the images on their shields, developed in two separate scenes (the *teichoskopia*, and the Messenger speech).[165] Again the function of the relationship with Aeschylus is a sticking point in scholarship. Vidal-Naquet argued that '*Seven* formed a sufficiently coherent whole for Euripides to strive to destroy it'.[166] Barbara Goff offers a more sympathetic reading. She stresses that Euripides' use of intertextuality in *Phoenician Women* is part of what the play 'advertises as its meaning and as the method of deciphering it'.[167] In what follows, I argue that Euripides' response to Aeschylus is self-consciously designed to provide more effective and more appropriate symbols for his attackers than did Aeschylus, and that

[163] Lamari (2010) 129–34 treats the description of the warriors in Aeschylus' *Seven* as a *teichoskopia* in the sense that it follows a similar narrative structure to the actual *teichoskopia* in Homer and in Euripides, but this has the unfortunate effect of obscuring the importance of vision and the gaze as a central feature in the *teichoskopia* model.

[164] Goldhill (2007*a*).

[165] On doubling and repetition in *Pho.* see Saïd (1985) 517–18.

[166] Vidal-Naquet (1981) 142; cf. Saïd (1985) 505 who suggests that Euripides destroys Aeschylean order and deconstructs the Aeschylean series.

[167] Goff (1988*a*) 135.

he constructs his intertextual dialogue through a game of literary capping. Euripides brings Aeschylean shield symbols to life as actualized warriors. He also (conversely) inscribes Aeschylean warriors and/or their attributes into the shields of his warriors. Image and metaphor from Aeschylus are transformed into material embodiment in Euripides and vice versa. This feature of Euripides' *Pho.* was briefly observed by Saïd.[168] She sees Euripides as playing with levels of imagery and reality and producing an effect of confusion. I take a different direction here, and suggest that the reworking of the shield scene in Euripides functions metapoetically, suggesting a reflection on the nature of poetic composition. The interchangeability of 'art' (here armour) with mythical figures is underlined in order to expose the very artifice of mythic 'realities'. Here also, as elsewhere in Euripides, the audience is invited to interpret the significance of *ekphraseis* for themselves.[169]

Shields into Warriors

The transformation of an Aeschylean shield blazon into an actualized champion warrior in *Phoenician Women* is a pattern repeated several times. The shield emblems described in both plays evoke images which would have been easily identifiable to a contemporary audience. That classical Greeks were very familiar with the potentially endless variety of iconography in heraldry is clear from a cursory glance through images of Athena on archaic and classical vases. Her shield is sometimes blank,[170] but more often emblazoned with, for example, circular or star-like patterns,[171] Pegasus,[172] the Chimaera,[173] laurel branches,[174] an owl on an olive branch,[175] and in one case an elaborate composite featuring a central apotropaic gorgoneion, encircled by three lions alternating with a winged horse, a winged goat, and a griffin,[176] to name but a few. Many other images

[168] Saïd (1985) 508–9. [169] Cf. Zeitlin (1994) 179.
[170] e.g. *LIMC* II.2 *s.v.* 'Athena', pl. 40.
[171] e.g. *LIMC* II.2 *s.v.* 'Athena', pl. 29, 74, 93, 119, 177, 493.
[172] e.g. *LIMC* II.2 *s.v.* 'Athena', pl. 120.
[173] e.g. *LIMC* II.2 *s.v.* 'Athena', pl. 122.
[174] e.g. *LIMC* II.2 *s.v.* 'Athena', pl. 501.
[175] e.g. *LIMC* II.2 *s.v.* 'Athena', pl. 600.
[176] e.g. *LIMC* II.2 *s.v.* 'Athena', pl. 182.

occur as shield emblems in Greek vase-painting.[177] In order to assist the following discussion, artist's illustrations of the warriors' shields in both Aeschylus and Euripides are provided as reference points for the reader. These are all inspired by referents from archaic and classical art, as listed. In Euripides' complex engagement with the Aeschylean shield *ekphrasis*, the invitation to compare *Phoenician Women* with *Seven* is reinforced through an appeal to such iconography. This is most immediately apparent in the presentation of Polynices.

Polynices

The clearest example of the metamorphosis of an Aeschylean image into Euripidean actuality is the figure of Polynices. Antigone says that she does not see him clearly (*Pho.* 161) but that she can somehow make out *μορφῆς τύπωμα στέρνα τ' ἐξηκασμένα*. Mastronarde translates this striking phrase as 'the moulded outline of his form and the semblance of his chest'.[178] The expressions *τύπωμα* 'moulded outline' and *ἐξηκασμένα* 'semblance', 'likeness' are both rare; *τύπωμα* occurs only here and on a moulded bronze urn in Sophocles (*El.* 54), *ἐξηκασμένα* only here in Euripides, but twice in Aeschylus, once in *Seven* (445) where the point is made that a real thunderbolt will come to Capaneus and not just the image of one.[179] The language used to describe Polynices is thus strongly evocative of a moulded artistic creation. Stieber observes that the term *μορφῆς* 'form' also has 'conceivable artisanal application',[180] and suggests two contexts for interpretation of this language, one from classical painting techniques, the other from sculpture.[181] The potential association of the term *τύπωμα* with something beaten or struck into shape (from the verb *τύπτω*), evokes the process of embossing a bronze shield.[182] I suggest that

[177] Lissarrague (2007) observes this common phenomenon, and confines himself to discussing the centaur as shield motif. Berman (2007) 33–86 discusses the shields of Aeschylus' Seven in the context of both literary and archaeological records.

[178] Mastronarde (1994) *ad* 162.

[179] Cf. Mastronarde (1994) *ad* 162.

[180] Stieber (2011) 234–5.

[181] Stieber (2011) 234–7 on painting, 378–9 on sculpture.

[182] Another possible root is *τυπόω* 'to impress', 'to mould'. On the various technical meanings of its more common synonym *τύπος*, and on Euripides' uses of the term, see Stieber (2011) 373–80. The shields of the attackers in *Seven* are of beaten bronze (539–40) or entirely of bronze (591); the bells on Tydeus' shield are bronze (386), as is the helmet from which the lots are shaken out (459).

Fig. 1. The shield of Aeschylus' Polynices © Aaron Ryan
Dike holding a hammer is inspired by late sixth-century BC images of *Dike* preparing to strike *Adikia* (*LIMC* III.2 *s.v.* 'Dike' with details given by H. A. Shapiro, *LIMC* III.1, 389). Pose of both figures inspired by those of Hermes and Hera, respectively, on the Attic red-figure hydria featuring Panoptes, attributed to the Agrigento Painter, *c.*470–460 BC, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston (Boston 08.417); Polynices is bearded in Aeschylus (*Seven* 666; cf. Sommerstein (2010) 84)

Polynices is described in these terms because he has been brought to life from the typology of the Aeschylean shield *ekphrasis*.

Polynices' shield emblem in Aeschylus' *Seven* (644–8) depicted an 'armed man of beaten gold' (*Seven* 644: *χρυσήλατον γὰρ ἄνδρα τευχηστήν*), obviously meant to symbolize Polynices, and the figure of *Dikē* 'Justice' leading him back to take possession of his ancestral home (Fig. 1). In Euripides, Antigone discerns the 'moulded outline' of Polynices *ὅπλοισι χρυσέοισιν ἐκπρεπής* 'conspicuous with his golden armour' (*Pho.* 168), and we are told that he and his army come to Thebes with *dikē* 'justice' on their side (*Pho.* 154: *σὺν δίκῃι δ'*

ἥκουσι γῆν). The description of Polynices, the most important of the attackers, and the first warrior to be described in *Phoenician Women*, is the living image of Polynices' shield emblem in Aeschylus. The clear transformation sets the scene for the transposition of other Aeschylean shield emblems into the world of the living. As the pattern develops, ekphrastic shield imagery is transferred from one hero in Aeschylus to a different one in Euripides. Indeed we could not expect a precise correlation between a named hero and his specific counterpart in each case since Adrastus figures instead of Aeschylus' Eteoclus in Euripides' seven champions. The representation of Polynices prepares us in one way for this shifting of imagery from one champion in Aeschylus to another in Euripides. The Euripidean Polynices has come to Thebes 'raging' with his army (*Pho.* 113: βρέμων). As the first attacker mentioned, this ties him textually to the first attacker mentioned in Aeschylus, Tydeus who also 'rages' (*Seven* 378: βρέμει) in his eagerness for war. Where Aeschylus saved Polynices for last in the climactic crescendo to the revelation that Eteocles will end up fighting his brother, Euripides presents him first and gives him a far clearer role in leading the expedition than his counterpart has in Aeschylus.[183]

Capaneus

The last attacker named in the *teichoskopia*, Capaneus, becomes the animate manifestation of the shield emblem of Aeschylus' Eteoclus (who does not feature in *Pho.*). At *Pho.* 180–1 Capaneus is said to be assessing the means of approach to the citadel and measuring the walls (visually, cf. Mastronarde *ad loc.*). This suggests his intention to scale the walls with a ladder, made explicit in the later Messenger speech (*Pho.* 1173–4, 1177–9). A man scaling the city walls with a ladder is precisely what is depicted on the shield of Aeschylus' Eteoclus (*Seven* 466–7; Fig. 2). The two descriptions are linked by the textual expression κλίμακος προσαμβάσεις 'rungs of a ladder' which occurs in the same end of line position at *Pho.* 1173 and

[183] The elevation of Polynices' role from an exclusively off-stage presence until his death in *Seven* to a prominent presence both on and off stage in *Phoenician Women* constitutes a secondary revaluation of his character in Genette's terms (i.e. the promotion of a secondary character in the *hypotext* to a more prominent role in the *hypertext*; see Genette (1997) 344).

Fig. 2. The shield of Aeschylus' Eteoclus © Aaron Ryan
Inspired by the image of an advancing black-figure warrior depicted on the tondo of a kylix attributed to the C painter, *c.*575–550 BC, British Museum, London (Vase B380 CVA British Museum 2 III H f Pl. 8,1)

Seven 466.[184] Where Eteoclus' shield boasts with an inscription stating that not even Ares can throw him off the wall (*Seven* 469), Euripides' Capaneus himself boasts that not even the sacred fire of Zeus will stop him from sacking the city (*Pho.* 1175–6).[185] The boast in defiance of

[184] *Seven* 466 is the only example of this expression in Aeschylus. It does not occur in Sophocles. The only instance of the word κλίμαξ in Sophocles is at *Trach.* 520 in the expression ἀμφίπλεκτοι κλίμακες but this refers to a wrestling trick where a wrestler jumped onto an opponent's back and interlocked his legs around him; it does not refer to an actual ladder. See Jebb (2004*a*) [1892] 193–4.

As a tactic of siege warfare, scaling ladders are clearly associated with stealth (cf. Thucydides 3.20–3), and in *Pho.* the fact that Antigone must ascend a ladder in order to observe the troops (100, 104) emphasizes that this is something she is not supposed to do.

[185] The image of Capaneus scaling the city walls seems to have been popular, see *LIMC* V.2 *s.v.* 'Kapaneus', pl. 12, Taplin (2007) 266–7, and cf. E. *Supp.* 497.

Zeus is something both the Euripidean and the Aeschylean Capaneus share.[186] In Aeschylus, Capaneus boasts that not even the wrath of Zeus falling to earth will impede him and blasphemously likens Zeus' lightning and thunderbolts to the noonday summer heat (*Seven* 428–31). Like all the attackers in Aeschylus, with the exception of Amphiaraus, Capaneus displays a dangerous arrogance towards the gods. In Euripides, the assumption of the Aeschylean Eteocles that Capaneus will run into fire that is real and not merely an image is proved to be accurate when Capaneus meets his end by a blast from Zeus' thunderbolt just as he reaches the top of the city walls; he is flung from his ladder and dies a gruesome bloody death (*Pho.* 1180–6).

Tydeus

The shield symbol of Aeschylus' Capaneus had been an unarmed man bearing a firebrand as his only weapon, with the accompanying inscription *πρήσω πόλιν* 'I will burn this city' (*Seven* 432–4; Fig. 3). In Euripides, it is Tydeus who becomes the physical embodiment of this shield-symbol. At 1121–2 he is referred to as Titan Prometheus carrying a torch in his right hand *ὡς πρήσων πόλιν* 'in order to burn the city'. In *Seven* the shield emblem of the man bearing a firebrand fits into a pattern reflecting different stages of human evolution, corresponding here to early man. The man is unarmed and naked (*Seven* 432) and scholars have noted the allusion to Promethean man in this image.[187] As a metaphorical Prometheus brandishing a torch, intending to carry out the inscribed threat from Aeschylus' shield, Euripides' Tydeus brings the Aeschylean Capaneus' shield emblem to life.[188]

Parthenopaeus

On the shield of Aeschylus' Capaneus (Fig. 3), the naked man is imagined as 'shouting' that he will burn the city (*Seven* 434: *φωνεῖ*).

[186] Saïd (1985) 506 notes that the Aeschylean Capaneus is recalled through the Euripidean Capaneus' association with threats against the city—*Pho.* 179–80 cf. *Seven* 426.

[187] e.g. Bernadete (1968) 7, Zeitlin (2009) 46, Morin (2001) 78.

[188] Mastronarde *ad* 1120–2 also notes that the passage 'is clearly inspired by the shield emblem of Capaneus, *Seven* 423–4'. He argues persuasively against the view that Prometheus is to be imagined as an image on Tydeus' shield along with the lion skin. As he demonstrates, Tydeus is a metaphorical Prometheus whose shield is covered with an actual lion skin.

Fig. 3. The shield of Aeschylus' Capaneus © Aaron Ryan
Pose inspired by that of Hermes on an Attic red-figure neck amphora attributed to the Eucharides Painter, *c.*490 BC, Museum für Kunst und Gewerbe, Hamburg, no. 1966.34; stylized firebrand inspired by painted images of Zeus' flaming lightning bolt (e.g. *LIMC* VIII.2 *s.v.* 'Zeus', plates 67, 75, 84)

We might draw a connection here to Euripides' Parthenopaeus who is physically said to be 'shouting for fire and pickaxes to raze the city' (*Pho.* 1154–5: *βοᾷ | πῦρ καὶ δικέλλας, ὡς κατασκάψων πόλιν*). More striking, however, is that Parthenopaeus is described as *τυφὼς . . . ὥς* 'like a *typhōs*' i.e. 'whirlwind' (*Pho.* 1154). The meaning of *typhōs* as 'whirlwind' or 'typhoon' is a metaphorical derivation from the homonymous monster *Typhōs* and his hundred smoke-belching snake-heads. This very monster is inscribed onto the shield of Aeschylus' Hippomedon (*Seven* 493–4; Fig. 4). Euripides' Parthenopaeus thus becomes the animate embodiment of a further Aeschylean shield *sēma*.

Fig. 4. The shield of Aeschylus' Hippomedon © Aaron Ryan
Inspired by a Laconian black-figure kylix depicting Typhon, *c.*560–500 BC, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York

In Aeschylus' *Seven*, Eteocles had sought to counteract the threat of the attackers by shifting a literal image into the metaphorical realm in the first three cases. So it is hoped that the night Tydeus associates himself with on his shield will turn out to be the 'night' of death for him (*Seven* 403). The fire-bearer on Capaneus' shield will be met by Polyphontes who is 'fiery' in spirit (*Seven* 448). Eteoclus' boast against Ares is met by Megareus who bears his 'boast' in his hands (*Seven* 473). Euripides goes one step further in his transformations of the shield blazons, bringing the devices to life as leading warriors. In doing so, he demonstrates a deep familiarity with Aeschylean drama, all while constructing and presenting his own mythological resolutions. The most important of Euripides' transformed warriors, Polynices, will also become a visible character on stage. That the other warriors are to be imagined in the off-stage space dovetails

with this play's visual feast and the multiple vistas into which the drama encourages us to gaze.[189] In addition to this, we can suppose that members of a fifth-century audience who were familiar with the *ekphraseis* of Aeschylus' *Seven Against Thebes* might well have vividly remembered the images from this drama. It has been argued, based largely on the parody of the oath ritual in Aristophanes' *Lysistrata*, that Aeschylus' *Seven* was reperformed before 411 BC.[190] The tragedy is mentioned by name as being 'full of Ares' in Aristophanes' *Frogs* (1021–2). Moreover, the Aeschylean *sēmata* are very much evocative of images familiar from ancient Greek art. Even the most unusual and personal of all the Aeschylean shield *sēmata*, namely Polynices being led back into the city by Justice, is paralleled in the iconographic tradition. The representation of two figures on a shield, with one appearing to lead the other, is found in the depiction of the tyrannicides on Athena's shield on an Attic black-figure amphora in the British Museum.[191] Furthermore, a historical parallel suggests itself in the infamous story of the return of the sixth-century tyrant Pisistratus to Athens who, with the collusion of his father-in-law, finds an unusually tall young woman whom he dresses up as Athena. She then poses as the goddess leading him back to power, in what Herodotus describes as a rare example of Athenian witlessness (*Histories* 1.60). 'Athena' appears to the Athenians as a living, breathing being through Pisistratus' deceptive ruse. In his *Phoenician Women* tragedy Euripides implicitly challenges the Athenian audience not to be witless and to recognize that he has created living beings from Aeschylean *sēmata*.

Warriors into Shields: A Game of Literary Eikasmoi

Just as Aeschylean shield-symbols are brought to life as warriors in Euripides, Aeschylean warriors and/or their attributes become inscribed into Euripidean shield-symbols. In each of these cases, the newly inscribed shield blazon suggests a capping of Aeschylean imagery. The practice of capping in Aristophanic comedy has been well

[189] On vision and viewing in *Phoenician Women*, see esp. Zeitlin (1994) 171–96.
[190] Lech (2008).
[191] *LIMC* II.2 *s.v.* 'Athena', pl. 140, with Pierre Demargne, *LIMC* II.1, 971.

studied.[192] Derek Collins has brought tragedy more firmly into the equation by discussing capping techniques in stichomythic exchanges and in antiphonal laments.[193] Recently, Jon Hesk has linked the combative capping of Aristophanic comedy to the symposium game of *eikasmoi* 'comparisons', defined in its most sophisticated form as 'a combative witticism which reconfigures its subject as another object based on the speaker's observation regarding that subject's actions, appearance or status'.[194] The game is engaged in by two individuals and is agonistic in nature, but what is interesting for our purposes is the game's focus on *appropriate* comparison between subject and image, which must be matched and ideally capped by the respondent. This cultural norm of capping by comparison seems to be lurking behind Euripides' response to Aeschylean shield *ekphraseis* where his own *ekphraseis* are presented as more appropriate to their bearer. Through evocation of Aeschylean imagery, Euripides implicitly engages his fictional creations in a one-way game of *eikasmoi* with the creations of Aeschylus, where there can be no respondents and Euripidean wit has the final word.

Parthenopaeus

The shield of Euripides' Parthenopaeus displays his mother Atalanta overwhelming the Calydonian boar with her far-shooting arrows (*Pho.* 1108–9; Fig. 5). It can be read as the reverse of the symbol on the shield of the Aeschylean Parthenopaeus, and as an attempt to present Parthenopaeus as appropriately named (which, as we saw, he was not in *Seven*). At *Seven* 541 the flesh-eating Sphinx (*Σφίγγ' ὠμόσιτον*), a figure from Theban history, adorns his shield. She has snatched one of the Cadmeans in her claws, a dangerous representation for the Thebans (Fig. 6). Attacking Parthenopaeus and striking the Cadmean on his shield with 'missiles' (*belē*) will be a bad omen for the Thebans.[195] In *Pho.*, Parthenopaeus, 'the offspring of the huntress' (1106), is defined through the symbol of his mother Atalanta. The symbol is *oikeion* (1107) meaning 'familial', but also with the potential meaning of 'fitting' or 'suitable' in the classical period (*LSJ s.v.* *οἰκεῖος* IV). The presence of Atalanta stresses Parthenopaeus'

[192] See e.g. Ruffell (2002), Rosen (2004).
[193] Collins (2004) 3–60.
[194] Hesk (2007) 131–2, quoting Hobden (2004) 130.
[195] Cf. *Seven* 544 and Sommerstein (2008) i. 208 n. 75.

Fig. 5. The shield of Euripides' Parthenopaeus © Aaron Ryan
Image of the Calydonian boar inspired by the Calydonian boar hunt depicted on an Attic black-figure volute krater by Kleitias, *c.*570–560 BC, Museo Archeologico Nazionale, Florence, no. 4029; pose of Atalanta inspired by that of Hera on the Attic red-figure hydria featuring Panoptes, attributed to the Agrigento Painter, (*c.*470–460 BC, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston (Boston 08.417)

inexperience and reliance on his mother. It simultaneously suggests that he *is*, after all, appropriately named as maidenish, aligned as he is with his mother the nymph. The interdependence of the two has been implied already by Antigone's wish that he and his mother be struck down together by Artemis (at *Pho.* 151 in the *teichoskopia*).

In a further manipulation, elements from the Aeschylean paradigm are reversed. The arrows are inscribed within the shield image in Euripides, where in Aeschylus they were imagined as an external threat. The positions of monster and human figure are reversed. In Aeschylus the monster subdues the mortal; in Euripides the nymph subdues the monster. The reversal and deconstruction of central

Fig. 6. The shield of Aeschylus' Parthenopaeus © Aaron Ryan
Sphinx inspired by numerous vase-paintings depicting Oedipus answering the riddle of the Sphinx (*LIMC* VII.2 *s.v.* 'Oedipus', e.g. plates 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 19, 22, 23, 39, 40)

features in the Aeschylean shield-symbol suggest a weakening of the image's threat to Thebes in Euripides. The Euripidean image thus caps the Aeschylean in terms of its appropriateness to the bearer and suggests a resolution to the Aeschylean anomaly where Parthenopaeus was not appropriately named.

Hippomedon

Euripides' Hippomedon bears 'Panoptes' on his shield, an epithet of the herdsman Argus who had been instructed by Hera to keep watch over Io (cf. A. *Supp.* 304, Ar. *Ecc.* 80). The designation of Argus by his epithet only is important. 'Panoptes', meaning 'the many-eyed', is qualified by the explanation that Panoptes sees all the time, some of his eyes seeing with the rising of the stars, some closing with their setting (*Pho.* 1113–18; Fig. 7). There are some problems in the

Fig. 7. The shield of Euripides' Hippomedon © Aaron Ryan
Inspired by the figure of Panoptes on an Attic red-figure stamnos, attributed to the Argus painter, classical period, Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna, no. 3729

language used in the transmitted text.[196] Nevertheless the overall sense is clear. Argus sees all the time, as elsewhere in Greek literature and art.[197] Mastronarde comments that the description suggests 'Argus depicted with eyes on many parts of his body (some open, some closed, and some half-open) against a background of the night sky with stars',[198] and Zeitlin has observes that Panoptes is a thematizing figure for the pervasive motif of sight in this play.[199] Another

[196] In particular there is the odd false antithesis, noted by Craik (1988) *ad* 1116–18, which implies 'that the eyes which opened with the appearance of the stars differ from those which closed with their setting'.

[197] Whether he has four eyes, as prevalent in the archaic period, or multiple eyes, as prevalent in the classical period, the function of Argus as all-seeing remains the same. See further by Gantz (1993) 200–2.

[198] Mastronarde (1994) *ad* 1116–17.

[199] Zeitlin (1994) 181.

Euripidean passage supports Zeitlin's observation. A fragment from an unidentified lost play (fr. 1063), in which a woman appears to be arguing with a repressive husband, also has an important thematic emphasis on sight and features Argus. The woman recommends that a wife should be allowed to wander freely, to *see everything* (fr. 1063.6: *βλέπουσά τ' εἰς πᾶν*) so that her vision is sated (fr. 1063.7: *τὴν ὄψιν ἐμπλήσασ'*). Thus, it is argued, a woman will not pursue evil, but one who is locked away will be so desperate to leave her husband that she would flee more swiftly than an arrow or a bird, even evading the numerous eyes of Argus (fr. 1063.14: *λάθοι δ' ἂν Ἄργοῦ τὰς πυκνόφθαλμους κόρας*). The imagined escape will be a great cause for laughter (fr. 1063.15: *μέγας γέλως*) because the husband will be helpless and his wife gone (fr. 1063.16).

Clearly the fact of evading Argus makes the desertion a complete and irreversible success. Argus' apparent inability to observe the fleeing wife also implies a collusive lack of apprehension, since Argus' main mythological role was as an ever-watchful guard over the maiden Io. In *Prometheus Bound* (678–9), Io's character complains that Argus was keeping pace with her, intemperate in his disposition, glaring with his multiple eyes. It is noteworthy, then, that the deprived wife in Euripides is seeking precisely what Argus symbolizes, an ability to see everything and sate her vision, so that the allusion to (and collusion of) Argus is thematically appropriate to its context. Similarly in *Phoenician Women*, the image of Argus represents an invitation to recognize (or see) its thematic significance. In terms of Euripides' intertextual *ekphrasis*, the image once again suggests a capping of an Aeschylean shield *sēma*, that of Tydeus which also features imagery of eyes and stars. His shield bore a blazing firmament full of stars with the full moon in its centre, described as 'the eye of night' (*Seven* 390: *νυκτὸς ὀφθαλμός*; Fig. 8). It might be concluded from this image that Tydeus can only see at night. As we have seen, the Aeschylean Eteocles reconfigures the image of night-time vision into a prophecy that the 'night' of death will fall upon Tydeus' own eyes (*Seven* 402–3). The shield of Euripides' Hippomedon, by contrast, incorporates a vision that is truly 'all-seeing', where the Euripidean *sēma* is a more effective apotropaic image than that of Aeschylus.

Tydeus

Euripides' Tydeus 'has on his shield a lion skin bristling with hair' (*Pho.* 1120–1: *λέοντος δέρος ἔχων ἐπ' ἀσπίδι | χαίτῃ πεφρικός*; Fig. 9).

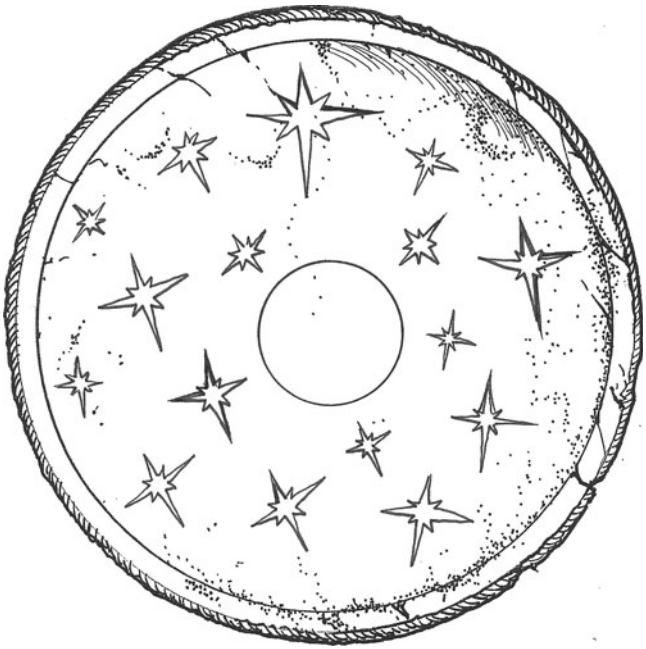

Fig. 8. The shield of Aeschylus' Tydeus © Aaron Ryan
Stylized stars inspired by stylized star motifs on various shields of Athena, *LIMC* II.2 *s.v.* 'Athena', e.g. plates 116, 119, 177, 493

Reading the image against Aeschylus' *Seven* we see another metaphor inscribed into fictional materiality. The attackers are described at *Seven* 53 as being 'like lions glaring Ares' (*λεόντων ὡς Ἄρη δεδορκότων*) because 'an iron-hearted spirit inspires them, blazing with courage' (*Seven* 52–3: *σιδηρόφρων γὰρ θυμὸς ἀνδρείαι φλέγων | ἔπνει*). In Euripides, Tydeus is no longer 'like a lion', rather he is the lion's conqueror expressed through the lion skin which adorns his shield. Aeschylean imagery is once again capped by Euripides. In Euripides it is no longer the attackers who are *σιδηρόφρων* 'iron-hearted', rather the autochthonous Thebans, the Sown men are reunited with the earth through *σιδαρόφρων . . . φόνος* 'iron-hearted slaughter' (*Pho.* 672–3). Mastronarde notes the Aeschylean echo,[200]

[200] Mastronarde (1994) *ad* 672; *σιδαρόφρων* occurs only in these two passages and at [Aesch.] *PB* 242.

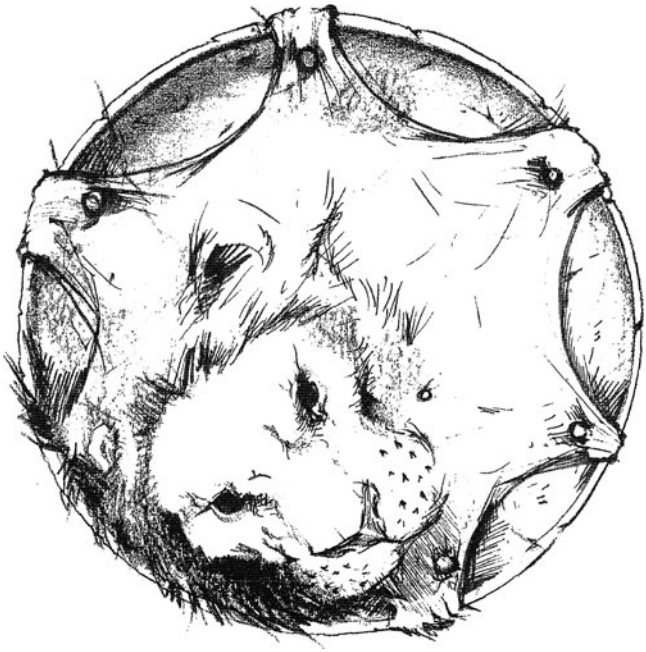

Fig. 9. The shield of Euripides' Tydeus © Aaron Ryan
Lion-skin shield, complete with head, inspired by various classical images of Heracles enclosed within his lion skin, e.g. Heracles and Athena, Attic red-figure kylix, attributed to Douris, *c.*490–470 BC Antikensammlungen, Munich, no. 2648

and the transfer of the rare metaphor 'iron-hearted' from the attackers in Aeschylus to the Thebans in Euripides suggests that iron-heartedness and blame reside in Thebes rather than amongst its attackers. This confirms the overall presentation in Euripides of the attack on Thebes as justified, with Polynices as a reasonable man, while Thebes remains riddled with doom as exemplified through Menoeceus' suicide, the lingering presence of a blind and imprisoned Oedipus, and Eteocles who is relentlessly stubborn and morally weak.

A similar effect is produced through the image of the μελάνδετον ξίφος 'black-bound sword' used by Menoeceus in his suicide (*Pho.* 1091). The rare term μελάνδετος 'black-bound' is used to describe the

shield over which the attackers offer their oath-sacrifice in *Seven Against Thebes* (43).[201] Menoeceus seems to be a Euripidean invention.[202] Determined to fulfil his destiny against his father's wishes, he swears an oath by Zeus and murderous Ares that he will not betray his family and city and leave the land like a coward. Rather he will sacrifice himself for Thebes (*Pho.* 1003–12).[203] Invoking Ares in an oath is unusual and recalls the oath of the Seven at *Seven* 42–8, where the champions swear by Ares, Enyo (a minor war goddess), and bloodthirsty Fear to sack the city of the Cadmeans or die in the attempt.[204] The oath-bound self-sacrifice of Menoeceus is thus constructed as an implied literary response to the aggressive and bloody oath-bound sacrifice of the attackers in Aeschylus (who dip their hands in the bull's gore). Transposing language from the Aeschylean attackers to Menoeceus reinforces this new character's destiny of doom.

Polynices

Euripides' Polynices bears on his shield blazon an intricately contrived device depicting crazed Potniad fillies whose leaping is effected through ingenious pivots (*Pho.* 1124–7; Fig. 10). The image can be seen as inscribing the battle-crazed horses of the Seven in Aeschylus (both real and metaphorical) into a shield blazon. In *Seven*, Tydeus is like a horse panting at the bit (*Seven* 393), Eteoclus has snorting, circling horses eager to fall on the gates (*Seven* 461–2), and the prologue had referred in general to 'the dripping white froth of their horses' breath defiling the plains' (*Seven* 60–1). In *Pho.*, while there are generic references to horses and horsemen, we do not find

[201] We find it once in Homer at *Iliad* 15.713, once in the Hesiodic *Shield* 221 and elsewhere in Euripides at *Or.* 821 and in the lost satyr-drama *Eurystheus* fr. 373; cf. Mastronarde *ad Pho.* 1091 on the rarity of this adjective.

[202] See Mastronarde (1994) 28–9.

[203] On the motif of self-sacrifice for the city in the plays of Euripides, see Wilkins (1990). The self-immolation of Menoeceus is our only example in Greek tragedy of a male sacrificed to save the city, though his sacrifice fits into the broader ritual and rhetorical patterns of self-sacrifice in Euripides. Wilkins (1990) 189 notes the disturbing quality of Menoeceus' self-immolation for 'a state whose gods and myths are undermined by her present rulers'. Swift (2009) sees Menoeceus' death as connected to the theme of familial and sexual distortion in *Phoenician Women*. Foley (1985) 132–39 discusses the effect of Menoeceus' sacrifice on the play's structure and the relation between Menoeceus' action and the world of the choral odes.

[204] On the oath of the Seven in Aeschylus, see Torrance (2007) 48–51.

Fig. 10. The shield of Euripides' Polynices © Aaron Ryan
Inspired by images of moving horses on Greek vase-paintings, for example Pegasus, *LIMC* VII.2 *s.v.* 'Pegasus', plates 17 and 153

any of the extended descriptions or horse metaphors that we find in *Seven*. The Potniad fillies of Polynices' shield, however, are loaded with symbolic associations. The horses belonged to Glaucus of Potniae (a town ten stades from Thebes), who fed them on a diet of human flesh in order to make them more aggressive in battle, though he ultimately became their victim when they turned on their master and ate him. That Aeschylus was the only tragedian to treat this myth in his lost *Glaucus of Potniae* is not insignificant for our discussion.[205] Euripides may well have been alluding to this play also in various ways. This is suggested not only by reference to the Potniad fillies but also by the similar conclusions to the games in Aeschylus' *Glaucus of Potniae* and the battle described by the Messenger at *Pho.* 1090–1199.

[205] See Sommerstein (2008) iii. 32–3, for a reconstruction of the basic plot.

Both end with a pile-up of chariots and corpses. In Aeschylus (fr. 38) *ἐφ᾽ ἅρματος γὰρ ἅρμα καὶ νεκρῷ νεκρός | ἵπποι δ᾽ ἐφ᾽ ἵπποις ἦσαν ἐμπεφυρμένοι* 'chariot upon chariot and corpse upon corpse, and horses upon horses were piled up in confusion'. In Euripides (*Pho.* 1194–5) *ἄξονές τ᾽ ἐπ᾽ ἄξοσιν | νεκροί τε νεκροῖς ἐξεσωρεύονθ᾽ ὁμοῦ* 'axles upon axles, corpses upon corpses were piled up together'.

It seems possible that Polynices' shield in Euripides inscribes elements from both *Seven* and *Glaucus of Potniae* in its *sēma*. The image of the Potniad fillies is appropriate to Polynices in several ways. As Mastronarde observes, the madness associated with them has connections with Erinyes-inspired madness, and Polynices is here acting under the curse of his father's Erinys.[206] More important, perhaps, is the strong symbolic parallel between Glaucus and Polynices. Glaucus violates the order of nature by feeding his horses human flesh and dies as a consequence. Polynices will similarly violate the order of nature by meeting his brother in battle, killing him, and dying as a result. The horses on his shield thus represent an attempt to be fierce in battle, but simultaneously foreshadow their bearer's downfall. In addition, the image supports the suggestion made by Sommerstein, following Schneidewin and Hartung, that A. fr. 387a, which refers to a fork in the road and a three-way junction at Potniae, can be attributed to *Laius*, indicating that the title character died at Potniae.[207] If there is a family connection to Potniae, Polynices' shield symbol ties him to the place where Laius was killed by Oedipus reinforcing the sense of repeated generational outraging of family bonds.

We can observe in this instance several ways in which Aeschylean images are capped by Euripides. The horses of Polynices' shield are not just battle-mad but flesh-eating. We are reminded of Aeschylus' Parthenopaeus and his flesh-eating Sphinx (Fig. 6). That device had been 'cunningly fastened and managed with rivets' (*Seven* 541–2: *προσμεμηχανημένην | γόμφοις ἐνώμα*) and is a separate construction attached to the shield.[208] The technological sophistication involved in producing the image is underlined. This is also the case with the device of Euripides' Polynices, though this is even more technologically complex. The fillies, also separate constructions attached

[206] Mastronarde (1994) *ad* 1124–5.
[207] Sommerstein (1996*a*) 122, and (2008) iii. 124–5, 324–5.
[208] See Hutchinson (1985) *ad* 541 f.

to the shield, are here made to move in order to seem distraught and crazed by an ingenious system of pivots (*στρόφιγξιν*) close to the shield's handle (*Pho.* 1126–7).[209] The mobility of the shield image in Euripides invites comparison to the multiple layers of moving images on the shield of Achilles described at *Iliad* 18.478–607. The complexity of the shield imagery in Homer underlines that it is extraordinary and divinely crafted.[210] Hephaestus, of course, does not need pivots to make his creations move, indeed he is attended by golden automata (*Iliad* 18.417–20). Nevertheless, the creation of a moving image on a shield requires significant technical skill.

This Euripidean capping of Aeschylus in relation to Polynices, the most important of the attackers, suggests a metaphorical comment on the process of poetic composition. *ῥήματα γομφοπαγῆ* 'words fastened together with rivets' are associated with Aeschylus at *Frogs* 824, and poets are often presented as craftsmen of physical artefacts in Greek poetry (e.g. poets are architects, masons, etc.).[211] The shields in both tragedies function as miniature examples of the skilled poetic composition of their creators. On this reading Euripidean drama, as symbolically represented by Polynices' shield, is shown to be more technologically complex, a reading which would certainly make sense when comparing the stagecraft of *Seven* and *Phoenician Women*. The former has a minimal number of characters (Eteocles, a Scout and a Messenger (possibly played by the same actor), and a chorus of Theban maidens),[212] and is relatively static in the action of its episodes (though some of its choral song is frenzied). *Phoenician Women*, by contrast, presents a packed Theban house complete with Eteocles, Polynices, Creon, Jocasta and Oedipus (both of whom might be presumed dead at this point in the saga), Tiresias, a

[209] It seems clear enough that the Sphinx in Aeschylus is to be thought of as immobile; cf. Hutchinson (1985) *ad* 541f. Saïd (1985) 507–8 does not seem to have considered Aeschylus' Sphinx device when she suggests that Euripides differs from Aeschylus in underlining the mechanism of shield construction.

[210] Taplin (1980) 3.

[211] Wright (2010), who discusses this issue, mentions the following examples at n. 38: Pindar, *Ol.* 6.1–4, *Pyth.* 3.113–14, 6.5, *Nem.* 4.79, 5.1–2, 8.46–7; Aristophanes, *Frogs* 1104, *Peace* 749–50, Pherecrates fr. 100 *PCG*. One can compare also S. fr. 159 (Radt = fr. 162 Nauck), E. *Andr.* 476, and Ar. *Frogs* 820, mentioned by Taillardat (1965) 438.

[212] Most scholars agree that Antigone, Ismene, and the Herald were not part of the original Aeschylean script. See Hutchinson (1985) *ad* 1005–78 and Dawe (1967) and (1978).

new character Menoeceus, a *teichoskopia* by Antigone, a foreign chorus, a Tutor, and two messengers.[213] The complexity of the intertextual *ekphrasis* of Polynices' shield thus functions as an emblematic representation of Euripides' inventive stage production.[214]

Capaneus

Aeschylus' Capaneus, a γίγας 'giant' (*Seven* 424), like several other Aeschylean metaphors becomes inscribed into the blazon of Euripides' Capaneus. The latter bears on his shield an earth-born giant who has removed the city from its foundations μοχλοῖσιν 'with crowbars' and carries it on his shoulder, a threat of what might happen to Thebes (*Pho.* 1131–3; Fig. 11). This *sēma* is clearly meant to stress the size and strength of a giant. More than holding a metaphorical 'threshing floor' as a shield as does Aeschylus' Hippomedon, also implicitly called a giant at *Seven* 424,[215] this inscribed giant can hold an entire city on his shoulders. The image brings to mind Atlas, on whose strong shoulders the sky rests.[216] The term μοχλός 'bar' is generally associated with situations of hostility and aggression, and in particular with superhuman strength. Polyphemus is imagined as being able to 'prise up rocks with a bar' (*Cyc.* 240: πέτρους μοχλεύειν), and the enormous stake which will be needed to blind him is a μοχλός 'bar' (*Cyc.* 633). In Euripides' *Heracles* the title character, in a fit of maniacal delusion, reportedly intending to go to Mycenae with μοχλοί 'crowbars' to lever the Cyclopean walls from their foundations (*Her.* 943–6), uproots the door frame of his own home (*Her.* 998–9).[217] The image in *Pho.* suggests notions of the divine origins

[213] The hypothesis to *Pho.* infamously complains that the play is παραπληρωματικόν 'over-stuffed'. Michelini (2009) discusses the play's 'epic ambitions'.

[214] Ancient scholarship on Homer recognized the mimetic potential of literary shields; see Eustathius' *Commentaries on Homer's Iliad* 3.144.

[215] Implicitly because Capaneus is called 'another giant' implying that Hippomedon who has just been described was also a giant; Euripides' Hippomedon is called a giant at *Pho.* 128.

[216] Cf. *Odyssey* 1.52–4, *Theogony* 517–20, *Pythian* 4.289–90, *Prometheus Bound* 347–50.

[217] It has been noticed that the Euripidean *hapax* used at *Her.* 946 συντριαινῶσαι 'to destroy with a trident' is associated with Poseidon (cf. Plato Comicus fr. 23) and shows that Heracles has delusions of divine power. See Barlow (1996) *ad loc.*, and de Jong (1991) 166. Callimachus exploits the same poetic image of men with the strength of giants 'fit to lift a whole city' uprooting trees in the sanctuary of Demeter at *Hymn to Demeter* 34 (cf. Hopkinson (1984) *ad loc.*); cf. also *Or.* 1473–5 where a whole group of captured slaves use crowbars and manage to break the door frames of the room in

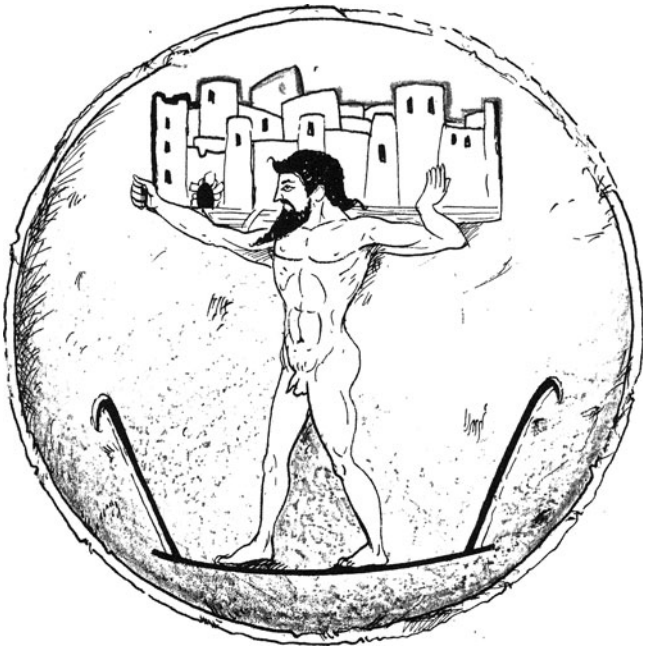

Fig. 11. The shield of Euripides' Capaneus © Aaron Ryan
Pose inspired by images of Zeus preparing to hurl his lightning bolt, *LIMC* VIII.2 *s.v.* 'Zeus', e.g. plates 67 and 70

of cities and the fear that those same forces might send destruction to a city which rouses their displeasure. Apollo and Poseidon, who build the walls of Troy and are then cheated out of their agreed wage by Laomedon, send destruction to the city.[218] That Ares is considered a founding father of Thebes (through his daughter Harmonia's marriage to Cadmus, and through the Spartoi sprung from the teeth of his serpent) is made clear by his ubiquitous presence in this episode of

which they are being held and escape. The term μοχλός and cognates are associated with aggression at E. fr. 1063.9, *Ba.* 348, 949, 1104, cf. *IT* 99, and with the prevention of hostility at A. *Cho.* 879, S. fr. 760, E. *Andr.* 951 (giving the opposite view to E. fr. 1063.9), *Or.* 1551, 1571.

[218] See Hellanicus, *The First Trojan War* fr. 26b (Jacoby), Virgil, *Georgics* 1.501–2, *Aeneid* 4.541–2, Ovid, *Metamorphoses* 11.205–6.

the Theban saga.[219] In Capaneus' shield blazon, Euripides not only inscribes the metaphor of superhuman strength through the figure of the giant, he also illustrates the effect this kind of strength can have on a city. As with Hippomedon's Panoptes, Capaneus' giant suggests a more appropriate and effective presence than the Aeschylean metaphor to which it refers.

Adrastus

The final shield to be described is that of Adrastus, who does not feature in Aeschylus (Amphiaraus has no shield blazon because he is not arrogant—cf. *Seven* 591–2 and *Pho.* 1111–12). The shield of Adrastus depicts one hundred snakes, which carry off the children of the Cadmeans in their jaws (*Pho.* 1135–8; Fig. 12). This recalls the hundred-headed snake monster *Typhōs* from the shield of Aeschylus' Hippomedon (*Seven* 493; Fig. 4).[220] As Eteocles in *Seven* observes, however, *Typhōs* is a monster who has been conquered. He sends a defender, Hyperbius, armed with the image of that conqueror—Zeus—on his shield (*Seven* 512–13). This is the only defender whose shield blazon is described. Mythical history repeats itself in Aeschylus when Hyperbius (armed with Zeus) defeats Hippomedon (armed with Typhōs) at the fourth gate. The unnamed hundred-headed monster in Euripides counteracts the concept of a force already defeated.[221] Furthermore it combines the image of a multiple-headed snake monster with the savagery of the Sphinx depicted on the shield of Aeschylus' Parthenopaeus, who has snatched a Cadmean and is holding him in her claws (*Seven* 543). In Aeschylus, one Sphinx carried off one Theban, but a monster with multiple heads can snatch away scores of Thebans at a time. More damaging to the Thebans also is the abduction of their *young*. The loss of its young adults is obviously a great blow to a city in which all able-

[219] Ares is associated with Thebes but, as the god of war, he is also very much present amongst the attackers. On the pervasive presence of Ares in *Seven*, see Torrance (2007) 40–2, 48–51. A similar pattern of Ares' ubiquitous presence can be observed in *Pho.*: cf. 134, 240, 253, 658, 784, 832, 934, 936, 1006, 1081, 1124, 1128, 1576. A contrast between Ares and Dionysus is developed in the second *stasimon* of *Pho.* on which see Arthur (1977) 176–8. For a full discussion of Ares' presence in *Seven* and *Pho.* see Jouan (2007).

[220] Cf. Hesiod, *Theogony* 825 for the number of Typhon's heads as one hundred.

[221] The identification of the snake monster on Adrastus' shield as the hydra at 1136 seems to be an interpolated gloss; see Mastronarde (1994) *ad* [1136].

Fig. 12. The shield of Euripides' Adrastus © Aaron Ryan
Stylized snakes inspired by those on Athena's aegis, e.g. *LIMC* II.2 *s.v.* 'Athena', plate 121 (red-figure Attic amphora, *c.*530 BC)

bodied males are at war, with many likely to die in battle.[222] That the Theban children are carried off ἐκ δὲ τειχέων μέσων 'from the midst of the city walls' (*Pho.* 1137) recalls the earlier reference to the snatching of the race of Cadmus by the Sphinx τείχεσι χριμπτομένα 'as she approached the city walls' (*Pho.* 809). Mastronarde observes that the internal allusion is strengthened by the external allusion to *Seven*, and comments on the 'effective variation' of the contrast between the snake-monster as Ἄργεῖον αὔχημ' 'an Argive boast' (*Pho.* 1137) and the Sphinx as τὸ γὰρ πόλεως ὄνειδος 'the city's shame' (at *Seven* 539).[223] In Aeschylus the Sphinx is 'the city's shame' because of the destruction she had inflicted on Thebes, but she was also successfully conquered by

[222] Cf. Goff (1988*a*) 150 who notes the importance of children in *Phoenician Women*.
[223] Mastronarde (1994) *ad* 1137.

a Theban (although Oedipus did not know he was a Theban at the time). This final *sēma* in Euripides, a nameless snake-monster depriving Thebes of its youth, combines effectiveness and appropriateness in its capping of Aeschylus.

COMBATIVE CAPPING?

The sympotic game of *eikasmoi* was evoked earlier to suggest a cultural framework for understanding Euripides' literary technique in capping Aeschylean imagery and shield symbols with his own. We can now refine this suggestion in light of the examples discussed. We have identified two trends in Euripides' capping of Aeschylean *sēmata*—an emphasis on effectiveness and a concern with appropriateness.[224] Such capping must be read in conjunction with the other major trend in Euripides' treatment of the Seven attackers, namely the transformation of Aeschylean shield symbols into warrior figures and vice versa. In this context, we can see that although Euripidean capping may be eikasmic in style, it is not wholly combative in a negative sense since Euripidean transformations are *based on*, and thus acknowledge the precedence of, Aeschylean imagery. One

[224] I cannot agree with Natanblut (2005) 40–5, who treats Euripidean shield emblems as misapplications of myth. In the case of Parthenopaeus it is precisely to emphasize the appropriateness of his name that Euripides aligns him with his mother. It is completely unreasonable to suggest that this association represents the misapplication of a mythic emblem. Natanblut's statement regarding Hippomedon's shield (43) that battle 'does not require continual watchfulness, but military prowess' is unsupported and speculative. Similarly his assessment of Argus as a less destructive force than Typhon fails to take into account the fact that Typhon is a monster already defeated by Zeus. His claim that the lion skin of Tydeus' shield is 'erroneously used' (43) because it should be on Tydeus' back is also speculative and represents an imported bias from Heraclean iconography. It fails to consider the fact that animal hides were regularly used to make shields, so that on a Minoan cup discussed by Koehl (1986) scholars have identified ox-hides and shields in the same image. The suggestion that Promethean fire is a benefit to mortals is fair enough, but fire also has the potential to be extremely dangerous making it absolutely appropriate as a threatening force. Natanblut's analysis of the Potniad fillies on Polynices' shield moving 'with fear' ignores the sensitive explanation of Mastronarde (1994) *ad* 1125, who shows that *φόβω* means 'in panic' and is 'a mark of their possession by madness'. The suggestion (44) that giants have nothing to do with uprooting cities (as depicted on Capaneus' shield) shows no awareness of the connection between superhuman strength and the levering of cities from their foundations, which I discussed above.

element common to the intertextual *ekphraseis* of both *Phoenician Women* and *Iphigenia among the Taurians* is the presence of *more* appropriate use of language or imagery than in the original. Moreover, these (and other) dramas by Euripides display the kind of detailed familiarity with Aeschylus' work parodied in Aristophanes' *Frogs*. When Dionysus urges the comic 'Euripides' not to exaggerate his critique of 'Aeschylus', 'Euripides' replies *Ἐγῷδα τοῦτον καὶ διέσκεμμαι πάλαι* 'I know the man and from have of old examined him from different angles' (*Frogs* 836). The kind of multidirectional analysis implied by the notion of examination from different angles is very much apparent in the complex ways Euripides reinvents Aeschylean material in *Phoenician Women*. Attention to detail also underpins the intertextual *ekphraseis* based on Homeric models. Iliadic paradigms are continued and reconfigured within new contexts in a thematically appropriate way. However, there is no discernible metapoetic suggestion that these are *more* appropriate than the models to which they refer. The intertextual *ekphraseis* which engage with Homer seem neutrally charged in relation to the Homeric text, and we shall see in Chapter 4 that Euripides repeatedly appeals to epic authority in his tendency to present *continuations* of epic paradigms, but *rival* versions of events from earlier tragedies. In the case of allusions to Aeschylus, there is clearly a tense coexistence in Euripides' work of admiration coupled with the desire to reconfigure the original in order to create something new. There is far more of Bloom's *anxiety* of influence (discussed in the Introduction) in Euripides' intertextual engagement with Aeschylus than in his relationship with Homer.

The *ekphraseis* discussed in this chapter combine a focus on the technological construction of buildings, arms, and ships, each of which implicitly reflects the poet's own art of constructing dramatic poetry, with an intertextual dimension. Well-known, indeed 'famous', literary models are evoked and rewritten for the audience. These often include imagery reminiscent of contemporary art or unusual metaphorical language, which facilitates audience recognition and visualization of the *ekphraseis*.[225] The degree of intertextuality present in Euripidean *ekphraseis* demonstrates the sophistication of his metapoetic strategies. Derek Collins has summarized some of the

[225] Chaston (2010) discusses the importance of visual cues for audience recognition and cognition in Greek tragedy.

central features of literary capping, which involves 'varying, punning, riddling, or cleverly modifying that topic or theme' to which it responds. The results of literary capping, as Collins notes, can vary significantly, sometimes producing antitheses of thought, sometimes complementarity and continuation.[226] This analysis confirms the variety of trends we have observed in Euripides' literary responses to Aeschylus and to Homer. Variation on or development of an accepted paradigm seems to be the central mechanism of intertextuality with Homer. Euripidean drama's relationship with Aeschylus is far more complex, involving variation, riddling, clever modification, and continuation, at times validating and at times refuting Aeschylean language and imagery. Throughout there remains a significant element of combative capping reminiscent of the sympotic game of *eikasmoi*.

A line from Euripides' lost *Philoctetes* illustrates this point concisely. It is preserved in Aristotle's *Poetics* (1458[b]23) along with an almost identical line from Aeschylus' lost *Philoctetes* tragedy. Philoctetes, suffering from the snake-bite, speaks of 'the malignancy which eats the flesh of my foot' in Aeschylus (fr. 253: *φαγέδαιναν ἥ μου σάρκας ἐσθίει ποδός*), while the Euripides fragment reads 'the malignancy which feasts on the flesh of my foot' (fr. 792: *φαγέδαιναν ἥ μου σάρκα θοινᾶται ποδός*). Aristotle gives these examples to make a point about poetic style. He suggests that the Aeschylean line is excellent while the Euripidean line is trivial (1458[b]21–2: *τὸ μὲν φαίνεται καλὸν τὸ δ' εὐτελές*). Although the verb *θοινάω* 'to feast' and the noun *θοίνα* 'feast' occur reasonably frequently in archaic and classical poetry,[227] the verb *ἐσθίω* 'to eat' is certainly more common, and Aristotle's position seems to be that words used in ordinary speech are better suited to iambic verse since this metre most closely approximates such speech (*Poetics* 1459[a]). The rhetorician Dio of Prusa (Chrysostom), who wrote a comparision of all three *Philoctetes* tragedies by Aeschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides, states specifically that Euripides was the *reverse* (*ἀντίστροφός ἐστι*) of Aeschylus (Oration 52.11) because he kept his language clear, natural, and related to common usage (*σαφῶς καὶ κατὰ φύσιν καὶ πολιτικῶς ἔχοντα*, Oration 52.14). What is so interesting about the fragments preserved in Aristotle is

[226] Collins (2004) ix.

[227] Examples from Aeschylus and Euripides include *Ag.* 1502, *LB* 257, *PB* 530, 1025, A. fr. 350.7, *Alc.* 542, *Cyc.* 248, 377, 550, *El.* 836, *Ion* 982, 1140.

that they illustrate an instance where Euripides reappropriates a line of Aeschylus but substitutes a *more* poetic term than in the original. This is striking because it appears to go against the stereotype of Euripides using less high-flown poetic language than his compound-building predecessor.[228] We shall see further in Chapter 4 how Euripides responds to Aeschylus in his *Philoctetes*, but for now we should note that the capping in the *Philoctetes* fragment is especially indicative of rivalry, since it playfully suggests that Euripides is beating Aeschylus at his own game.

Intertextuality has been an important thread in these first two chapters, but this is just one of several metapoetic techniques employed by Euripides. If we take the example of *Phoenician Women*, discussed in most detail in this chapter, we can see how Euripides also draws attention to the novelty of his plot developments through exploitation of the term *mythos* implying 'mythic fiction'. Jocasta's task of attempting a reconciliation of her sons is to speak *mythoi* (*Pho.* 445), and her death over their corpses is also a *mythos* that the messenger is loath to tell (*Pho.* 1335).[229] Indeed, when Jocasta tells Eteocles that 'slow' or 'delayed' *mythoi* achieve the greatest wit (*Pho.* 453: *βραδεῖς δὲ μῦθοι πλεῖστον ἀνύτουσιν σοφόν*) she prefigures metatheatrically the development of the plot itself, which as Saïd discussed, is made up of a whole sequence of delayed actions.[230] The innovation of the required sacrifice of Menoeceus seems similarly emphasized in a self-conscious manner when Creon asks Tiresias, surprised by his prophecy 'What is this *mythos* you have told, old man?' (*Pho.* 915: *τίν' εἶπας τόνδε μῦθον, ὦ γέρον;*)[231] Euripides' Polynices seems to challenge (Aeschylean?) obscurity in mythic poetry when he says 'the truthful word (*mythos*) is simple' (*Pho.* 469: *ἁπλοῦς ὁ μῦθος τῆς ἀληθείας ἔφυ*). The sentiment is identical to a line from Aeschylus' *Judgement of the Arms* (fr. 176) *ἁπλᾶ γάρ ἐστι τῆς ἀληθείας ἔπη* 'the words of truth are simple'. Did Euripides have this gnomic statement in mind? If so, the fact that he uses the

[228] C. Müller (2000) 235 discusses this unusual comparison made between Aeschylus and Euripides.

[229] The mother's role as mediator seems to have been a feature in Stesichorus though we do not know if the mother-figure in Stesichorus was the incestuous Jocasta or an alternative non-incestuous mother. See further Mastronarde (1994) 25–6.

[230] Saïd (1985).

[231] On Euripides' manipulation of the figure of the prophet in *Phoenician Women*, see Papadopoulou (2001) 21–6.

term *mythos*, while Aeschylus uses *epē* to express the same sentiment, implies that *mythos* has a metapoetic potential in Euripides. In the next chapter we shall see how Euripides exploits the term *mythos* in conjunction with the motif of writing as a metapoetic strategy to suggest that he is writing new fictions.

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3

Writing and Self-Conscious *Mythopoiēsis*

Euripides uses a variety of strategies to draw attention to the novelties in his dramatic myth-creation or *mythopoiēsis*. He does so, as we have seen, through multiple allusions to earlier poets, distinguishing himself from predecessors by acknowledging their influence while simultaneously producing something distinctive. Euripidean novelties are legitimized in several instances through cultic aetiologies.[1] A technique which has not been sufficiently studied is Euripides' exploration of the motif of writing and its connection to the act of *mythopoiēsis* within his work. Scholars who discuss writing in Euripides have done so either within the general context of inherent tensions between oral and written communication in Greek tragedy (or Greek literature),[2] or have focused on the use of letters as dramatic devices.[3] This chapter argues that Euripides exploits the motif of writing in a way which is entirely different from the other tragedians, and puts forward the thesis that writing in Euripides is associated self-consciously and metapoetically with plot construction and authorial control. The plays in which writing features draw attention to the novelty of their plots, both through references to

[1] We discussed the aetiologies of Euripides' *IT* in Ch. 1, but it is worth noting that Euripides was especially fond of aetiological conclusions for his dramas. Only *Eumenides* in Aeschylus and *Oedipus at Colonus* in Sophocles present aetiologies, while Euripides gives aetiologies in most of his extant plays, including *Andromache*, *The Children of Heracles*, *Electra*, *Helen*, *Hippolytus*, *Iphigenia among the Taurians*, *Medea*, *Orestes*, *Suppliants* (discussed later in this chapter).

[2] C. Segal (1985) and (1986), D. Steiner (1994) esp. 10–60.

[3] P. Rosenmeyer (2001) 61–97 and Jenkins (2006) 81–107 focus on the kinetic power of letters in drama; Griffiths (2007) argues that Euripidean letters are 'instruments of political control' which represent unsuccessful attempts to 'fight the future' and can be linked to the illusory confidence in political control which is a narrative feature in Thucydides (277).

written texts and through exploitation of the term *mythos*, meaning 'fiction' (as I argue), at key moments in the plot where Euripides deviates from tradition.

This chapter is a revised version of an article which appeared in the 2010 volume of the *Cambridge Classical Journal*, and I can now further contextualize my arguments concerning Euripides' use of the term *mythos* thanks to an illuminating article published by Robert Fowler in the *Journal of Hellenic Studies* for 2011. Fowler re-examines the term *mythos* as it appears in the Presocratics, Herodotus, and the Sophists and shows that *mythos* regularly means 'myth' (in our sense of the term) by the mid-fifth century BC, significantly earlier than scholars have usually maintained.[4] Although *mythos* in the archaic period generally denotes truth rather than falsehood, the term was always associated with performative speech and the authority of important male leaders. If such authority structures change, as they did in Greece, 'the traditional reason for believing the *mythos* falls away', so that in democratic Athens 'all talk of the big men is suspect just because it is the talk of big men'.[5] Fowler links the questioning of *mythos* to the textualization of myth, and to the fifth-century authors' awareness of requiring strategies to deal with difference in myth, arguing that this awareness is implicit in Herodotus and explicit in Thucydides.[6] The self-conscious association between written texts and new fictions in Euripides is thus clearly at home within this broader Athenian context.[7]

This chapter also proposes a refinement to the suggestion made about Greek tragedy by the late Charles Segal. He concluded that through the 'tension between speaking and writing within the tragedy itself, the poet holds up a mirror to his own art-form . . . but simultaneously he effaces himself from the performance and renounces the authoritative presence of the speaking voice that marks the oral poet'.[8] This remark was qualified by Segal with regard to Euripides

[4] R. Fowler (2011). He observes (52), for example, that *mythos* in Herodotus is associated with poetry, fiction, and the unverifiable, and with (poetic) deception in Pindar (55–6).

[5] R. Fowler (2011) 54.

[6] R. Fowler (2011) 60–2.

[7] R. Fowler (2011) 62 with n. 69 briefly observes that *mythos* tends to be used in its epic sense in tragedy, but that self-conscious examples of the term's use exist in Euripides.

[8] C. Segal (1985) 225; cf. C. Segal (1986) 79 on the tragic poet as absent from his work.

who 'pushes this tension to its furthest limits in the *Bacchae*, for there the god of the mask . . . himself appears onstage as a wearer and user of masks', where the mask is 'the sign of man's power to shape fictions'.[9] The *Bacchae*, of course, is not a play which features writing as a motif. The tension there remains one between script and performance.[10] It is primarily the *performance* in *Bacchae* that is meta*theatrical*, as Segal's work has well illustrated.[11]

What this chapter seeks to demonstrate is the meta*poetic* importance of Euripides' emphasis on his skill as a scriptwriter through his exploration of writing and *mythopoiēsis*, where metapoetry reminds the audience of tragedy's status as a scripted poetic composition written within the confines of established mythology. Rather than effacing himself from the performance and renouncing an authoritative presence, I suggest that it is precisely his authority as a dramatist that Euripides implicitly underlines. The metatheatricality of the *Bacchae* thus represents just one aspect of Euripides' literary and dramatic self-consciousness in seeking to make the audience aware of his skill as a tragic poet. Although my arguments concerning the individual plays remain essentially unchanged since 2010, I have revised some general conclusions. I had suggested that the prominence of writing as a motif along with Euripides' sophisticated metapoetic techniques implied that he was 'writing primarily for an élite aristocratic audience' and an 'educated and theatrically sophisticated audience'.[12] Two books published in 2011, one by David Roselli on the composition of the theatre audience at Athens, and one by Anna Missiou demonstrating the pervasiveness of literacy among the population of Athens, have influenced my revised conclusions. I acknowledge that the framework of élitism I suggested was too exclusive and that wealth, literary education, and theatrical competence are not necessarily interdependent issues. Nevertheless,

[9] C. Segal (1985) 226 and C. Segal (1986) 106, respectively.

[10] On the tension between performance and script in Greek tragedy, cf. C. Segal (1986) 76–8 who rightly criticized Havelock's excessive emphasis on the oral nature of Greek tragedy in Havelock (1980). Wise (1998), however, goes too far in the other direction, and seriously underestimates the importance of a culture of oral performance in ancient Greece when she says (5) that theatre '*owes its existence* to the alphabet' (Wise's italics). For criticisms of Wise's arguments see reviews by D. Steiner (2000), Fletcher (2000), and Travis (1999).

[11] See esp. C. Segal (1982) 215–71.

[12] Torrance (2010*a*) 215 and 250.

I maintain that references to written texts combined with sophisticated intertextuality in the plays of Euripides strongly suggest that one portion of his audience was part of a reading public.

WRITING IN GREEK TRAGEDY

That Euripides' interest in writing was particularly pronounced is easily established when we consider the few cases where writing features in Sophocles and Aeschylus. The different ways in which the three great tragedians explore the concept of writing underlines some common concerns, but also suggests a marked development in the perception of writing over the course of the fifth century. Aeschylus and Sophocles commonly exploit the metaphor of writing as memory where Euripides does not.[13] When Prometheus explains that he invented writing in the Aeschylean *Prometheus Bound*, he does so in terms that reflect this metaphor. The 'combining of letters' (*γραμμάτων τε συνθέσεις*) is presented as 'a memory of all things, mother Muse's worker' (*μνήμην ἁπάντων, μουσομήτορ' ἐργάνην*, *PB* 460–1).[14] The image is later reinforced with an explicit metaphor when Prometheus predicts Io's wanderings and tells her to 'write them down in the memory-tablets of [her] mind' (*PB* 789: *ἐγγράφου σὺ μνήμοσιν δέλτοις φρενῶν*). Segal observed that the immobile Prometheus is himself like 'the organizing force of a written text',[15] but the fact remains that Aeschylus never seems to have used a written text as an object in performance. Even in his *Palamedes*, which dramatized a mythic episode dependent on a letter, namely Odysseus' betrayal of Palamedes by means of a forged letter (and Palamedes' subsequent death), the dropping of the letter in the camp must have happened outside dramatic time.[16]

[13] Cf. A. *Supp.* 179, 991, *LB* 450, *Eum.* 275, *PB* 789, S. *Phil.* 1325, *Trach.* 683, *Triptolemos* fr. 540; Sansone (1975*b*) 54–63, esp. 59, has shown that writing is the only metaphor for memory found in Aeschylus.

[14] Ford (2003) 32 n. 61 observes that writing is intrinsically connected with poetry here through association with the Muses.

[15] C. Segal (1986) 84.

[16] The action of Aeschylus' *Palamedes* began *after* the accusation against Palamedes had already been made; see Sommerstein (2008) iii. 182–5 on fr. 180a (= Radt 451k). Most scholars agree that Aeschylus' *Palamedes* is the basis for the summary in

Elsewhere in Aeschylus, writing is associated with threatening situations. The sealed writings of the Egyptian despot are intrinsically presented as tyrannical and are berated in contrast to the free speech of Greeks (A. *Supp.* 944–9).[17] The personification of Justice, Dike, records the crimes of men on the writing tablet of Zeus (*The Dike Play* fr. 281a 20–1).[18] In *Seven Against Thebes*, three of the seven attackers have written inscriptions on their shields, which threaten Thebes with destruction (*Seven* 434, 468–9, 646–8). The contrast between writing and speech, suggested in Aeschylus' *Suppliants*, is resolved in *Seven* by representing the open inscriptions as the voice of the accompanying figures who 'speak' (*Seven* 434 *φωνεῖ*, 647 *λέγει*) or 'shout' (*Seven* 468 *βοᾷ*) their messages. The significance of these messages should, I think, be linked to the binding quality associated with inscriptions. Once the text has been inscribed, particularly on a hard substance like stone or metal, the message is imbued with the authority of immutability.[19] Immutability is thus linked with the authorial desire to ensure that the message will come into effect, as in the case of *katadesmoi*, 'curse tablets', which are inscribed most importantly with the name of their victims, and in some cases with elaborate wishes for sufferings to be inflicted on them.[20] So also in *Seven*, where curses and cursing have great thematic importance, the shield inscriptions are an attempt to control the outcome of the

[Apollodoros] *Epitome* 3.7–8 (see Jouan and Van Looy (2000) 490–5). Sommerstein and Talboy (2011) give further detailed arguments in support of this majority view, rejecting the earlier tentative endorsement by Sommerstein (2000) 123 n. 10 of the alternatives put forward by Scodel (1980) 43–63.

[17] See further D. Steiner (1994) 166–9.

[18] This same concept is dismissed by a character in one of Euripides' *Melannipe* plays (fr. 506), who asks if others really believe that crimes fly up to the gods on wings and that someone writes them down in the folds of Zeus' writing tablet. The speaker finds it unlikely since, they say, the entire sky would not suffice to record all the crimes.

[19] On the growing connection between writing and ritual authority in Greece in the archaic and classical periods, see Henrichs (2003) and cf. Slater (1996) 103 on written oracles in *Birds*. It was not impossible, of course, to rewrite an inscription on metal or stone, but the process would have been extremely labour-intensive and may not have had the desired effect. In late 5th-cent. Athens, Nicomachus, one of the experts appointed to reinscribe the Solonian law code worked for many years on the project, from 410 to 404 and again from 403 to 399, only to be taken to court after being accused of abusing his position to insert new laws and erase existing ones; see Lysias 30 and discussion in Henrichs (2003) 54–7. On writing and law in classical Athens see further Gagarin (2008) 176–205.

[20] On curse tablets as 'preemptive strikes' to bind an enemy, see Faraone (1991).

war.[21] In Aeschylus this attempt fails and the oral hermeneutic logic of Eteocles succeeds over the vain hopes of the attackers and their inscriptions.[22]

In extant Sophocles, as in Aeschylus, there is no instance of a piece of writing featured as a stage property. Where writing is referred to in Sophocles, it does not have a strong impact on the plot. Much has been made of *Antigone*'s famous 'unwritten laws of the gods' (*Ant.* 454–5) and their clash with the edict of Creon which forbids the burial of Antigone's brother. Any tension between *written* and unwritten law is not at all supported by the text, however, since Creon's edict is only ever referred to as a *kērugma* 'proclamation' (*Ant.* 8, 454). Indeed, Edward Harris has demonstrated in a sensitive article how the written laws of the *polis* were designed to *support* rather than clash with the unwritten laws of the gods. He shows persuasively that 'Antigone has a strong case in regarding Creon's command . . . as only an order (*kērugma*) without the force of law (*nomos*)'.[23] In *Women of Trachis*, by contrast, reference *is* made to a material written document, though it is never brought out on stage. Deianeira refers to a writing-tablet (*deltos*) left by Heracles (*Trach.* 46–8). It is revealed during the course of the play that the tablet contains a prophecy given to Heracles at Dodona: he will either die on his Labours or he will rest for the remainder of his days. The tragic reality of the prophecy is fulfilled when he is faced with the eternal rest of death, as he ultimately realizes (cf. *Trach.* 76–81, 155–70, 1169–73).[24] The writing-tablet here carries no agency for changing the course of the plot; rather it symbolizes the very opposite in containing the information on Heracles' predetermined path in life. The oracular text from Dodona is implicitly contrasted with the metaphor of writing as memory in the deceptive predictions of the Centaur Nessus, whose instructions for a love potion (actually a death potion) are 'like the writing (*graphē*) on a bronze writing-tablet (*deltos*) which cannot be washed out' (*Trach.* 683). Laurel Bowman has

[21] On the thematic importance of curses in *Seven* see especially Stehle (2005) and cf. Torrance (2007) 42–6.

[22] On the hermeneutics of the shield scene, see especially Bernadete (1968), Zeitlin (2009) 31–119, Torrance (2007) 68–88; D. Steiner (1994) 50–60 has a brief discussion.

[23] Harris (2004), quotation from p. 36.

[24] The tablet does not, in fact, contain Heracles' will as 157–63 might at first glance appear to imply (*pace* C. Segal (1986) 94); cf. Easterling (1982) *ad* 161–8 and Davies (1991) *ad* 157–8.

discussed how the image of writing connecting the two predictions in this play is suggestive of authority (specifically male authority).[25] Within the tensions of oral and written communication, however, it remains the oral memory, the metaphorical 'writing', in Sophocles that radically changes the course of the plot causing the death of Heracles at the hands of his unwitting wife, and her subsequent suicide.

It is possible that Sophocles *did* use a written text as a stage property in one or more of his lost plays. The forged letter might have been a significant object in the performance of his *Palamedes*, and might have been read on stage to the chorus of Greek leaders after its discovery.[26] Similarly in *The Gathering of the Achaeans* (*Achaiōn Syllogos* fr. 144) it seems that a roll call of participants in the expedition to Troy (who had sworn the oath of Helen's suitors) was made by someone 'holding inscribed tablets' (*γραμμάτων πτυχὰς ἔχων*). This may have been a diplomatic ploy aimed at smoothing tensions with Achilles, who was not one of Helen's suitors and so not bound by oath to join the expedition.[27] In both these cases, however, the *reading aloud* of the text transforms it from writing to speech where speech is once again the privileged medium. It has been argued also, following the scholium to Aristophanes' *Birds* 212 that the 'voice of the shuttle' in Sophocles' *Tereus* (fr. 595), through which the mute Philomela revealed to her sister the awful truth of her rape and the removal of her tongue by her Thracian brother-in-law, included a written message. The problem remains, however, that the woven image would work powerfully as a communication without a written message (cf. Helen's weaving of the Trojan war in *Iliad* 3). Perhaps the names 'Tereus' and 'Philomela' featured in the tapestry as names often do on vase-paintings, and were read aloud by Procne as she recognized her sister.[28]

[25] Bowman (1999), whose arguments underline this play's focus on the fate of the male.

[26] The reconstruction of Sophocles' plot is based on the assumption that it forms the basis for summaries in Serv. on Verg. *Aen.* 2.81 and Hyg. *Fab.* 105; see Jouan and van Looy (2000) 490–5 and Sommerstein and Talboy (2011) pp. 110–73

[27] See further Sommerstein (2006*c*) *ad Syndeipnoi* or *Achaiôn Syllogos* fr. 144. For a discussion of the kinds of lists of military personnel that were kept in classical Athens, see Bakewell (2007).

[28] Dobrov (1993) 204 emphatically asserts that it is 'clear that Philomela's weaving involved a *written* message, a feature invented by Sophokles for his dramatic purposes' (Dobrov's italics), but see Fitzpatrick and Sommerstein (2006) *ad* fr. 595 who note that the piece of weaving itself is a Sophoclean invention and who give a broader range

What emerges from this brief survey is that Aeschylus and Sophocles present writing in very different terms from Euripides. The older tragedians systematically privilege the medium of orality over writing, as emblematized by their regular use of the metaphor of writing as memory. For Euripides, who never uses this metaphor, writing functions in combination with speech to ensure successful authorial control. Moreover, writing in Euripides is (for the first time in antiquity) internalized and processed as *text*, rather than being read aloud as in Sophocles.[29] The importance attached to writing in Euripides is well demonstrated by comparing what we know of the *Palamedes* plays of the three great tragedians.

WRITING AND FICTION IN EURIPIDES' *PALAMEDES*

In all three *Palamedes* plays, the title character is credited with many inventions beneficial to mankind, several of which are elsewhere attributed to Prometheus (as in *Prometheus Bound*).[30] Euripides, however, is the only tragedian (as far as we can tell) to associate Palamedes specifically with the invention of writing. In Aeschylus, Palamedes has invented order in the lives of humans, arithmetic (A. *Pal.* fr. 181a), army ranks, and organized mealtimes (A. *Pal.* fr. 182). In Sophocles, Palamedes has taught the Greeks the construction of walls, the sciences of weights, numbers, and measures, the marshalling of armies, how to understand heavenly signs, how to count, how to use beacons, and the science of astronomy with its tremendous impact on human lives (*Nauplius* fr. 432); he has also driven away famine and invented the games of draughts and dice (S. *Pal.* fr. 479; cf. *Nauplius* fr. 429). With such a plethora of inventions to his name, it is striking that, although a letter seems to feature in both Aeschylean and Sophoclean treatments, nowhere is writing mentioned in the surviving fragments of either tragedian.

of possibilities for this scene (and note *pace* Fitzpatrick and Sommerstein that Iphigenia in Euripides' *IT* is *not* literate, as discussed below).

[29] Knox (1968) 433 discusses Euripides' *Hippolytus* as the first example of silent reading in antiquity, and Svenbro (1990) connects the invention of silent reading with the image of writing as a voice; see also *Erechtheus* fr. 369 and Ford (2003) 31.

[30] On the alternative traditions for the invention of language in Greek myth and culture see Gera (2003) 112–81.

Equally striking is the fact that writing is the *only* invention of Palamedes referred to in the fragments of Euripides, where it is discussed at length by Palamedes himself, who stresses its great value (E. *Pal.* fr. 578).[31] He says he has created *συλλαβάς* 'syllables' that are *ἄφωνα καὶ φωνοῦντα* meaning either 'consonants and vowels' or, more literally, 'voiceless and speaking'. Both meanings seem important here. As the earliest examples of the terms 'consonants' and 'vowels' in classical Greek the passage draws attention to the technicality of writing.[32] That the syllables are both 'voiceless' and 'speaking' confirms the autonomy of the text in delivering its message. It is the voiceless text itself which speaks. It does not need to be voiced.

Several uses of writing are enumerated in this fragment (fr. 578). It is a cure (*pharmakon*) for forgetfulness. It enables a man absent over seas to have good knowledge of his affairs at home. It allows a dying man to make clear his bequests. In both these cases the issue is one of positive authorial control. Writing gives men more control over their affairs across long distances and across time, even after death. The final virtues of writing mentioned by Palamedes refer directly and ironically to his own end: the *deltos* 'writing-tablet' can clear up 'strife' (*ἔριν*) between men, 'and it prevents false speaking' (*κοὐκ ἐᾷ ψευδῆ λέγειν*). In the first instance he is correct, though clearly he is not aware of the implications for his own fate, since it is a letter (*deltos*) that will resolve the long enmity between himself and Odysseus.[33] In the second instance Palamedes is gravely mistaken. Not only can writing be manipulated for deceit, the written text is also imbued with an authority which makes that deceit especially dangerous. In fact the ambiguity of the power of writing is well captured in Palamedes' designation of written texts as *pharmaka*, a term which

[31] Slater (2002*a*) 301 n. 75 notes that Palamedes is associated with the invention of drinking in Eupolis (fr. 385).

[32] These terms are used in the technical sense also in Plato (*Cra.* 393e). Falcetto (2002) 102 with n. 36 notes that the word *συλλαβαί* 'syllables' itself is rare in tragedy, occurring only here and in Aeschylus. She correctly refers us to *Seven* 468, but should not have listed *Supp.* 457, where 'syllables' do not feature.

[33] Odysseus had tried to avoid joining the Trojan expedition (to which he was bound by oath as one of Helen's suitors) by feigning madness. Palamedes exposed his deception by placing Odysseus' son Telemachus in danger thus forcing him to reveal his sanity (*Cyp.* Arg. §5 West). So arose the hostility which led to Odysseus' subsequent betrayal of Palamedes. Envy at Palamedes' cleverness is also mentioned as a motive for Odysseus' enmity (e.g. Xen. *Mem.* 4.2.33).

refers to drugs whether healing or poisonous.[34] The great tragedy of Palamedes' fate—the inventor of writing betrayed by the very success of his invention[35]—is based on his failure to understand the power of his invention. Indeed Euripides seems to have taken sophisticated measures to ensure the convincing nature of the incriminating letter since his Odysseus forces a Trojan captive to write it *in Phrygian letters* (scholium on *Orestes* 432).[36] Several tragedies toy with the notion of foreign speech, but this episode is unique in presenting a text *written* in a foreign language.[37] The letter in Sophocles was written by Odysseus himself, ostensibly in Greek.[38] The innovation of forging the letter in Phrygian characters underlines Euripides' concern with making the written deceit as effective as possible. This tension between duplicity and the mask of authority inherent in the forged document serves to reflect the very nature of the tragic text where the fictitious script is designed to invite the audience to believe in its illusion.[39]

The dual potential of writing as an instrument for both duplicity and resolution was further developed in Euripides' *Palamedes* through a second written text. A scene from Aristophanes' *Women*

[34] Compare the use of the term *pharmakon* in Euripides' earlier *Hippolytus* where it functions as a metaphor for persuasive language (both positively and negatively), as demonstrated by Barbara Goff (1990) 48–53. Plato, of course, presents writing as a *pharmakon* in his *Phaedrus* 274e–275a, as famously discussed by Derrida (1981) 95–117.

[35] Thus paying the price for his own ingenuity like other legendary inventors (*Brewer's Dictionary of Phrase and Fable s.v.* 'inventors' lists ten examples, though Palamedes is not one of them).

[36] How the letter was interpreted is not clear. Perhaps it was read by another captive, one with some knowledge of Greek also. Perhaps the Phrygian letters were recognizable to the Greek leaders even if they could not read them, and this was enough to condemn Palamedes.

[37] On foreign speech (and song) in tragedy, see Hall (1989) 17–19, 76–9, 117–21, 129–32. Herodotus displays an interest in foreign languages, but this rarely includes aspects of their written form; see Munson (2005) 27 and 65.

[38] See further Jouan and van Looy (2000) 490–5.

[39] Compare the often-quoted fragment of Gorgias which names tragedy as a deception (*apatē*) presented through *mythoi* where the one who deceives is more just than the one who does not deceive, and the deceived more wise than the one who was not deceived (DK 82 B23). The advent of writing was linked to the development of 'fiction' as we understand it by Rösler (1980) 285, 302–8. E. Bowie (1993) and Finkelberg (1998) have shown that Rösler's analysis is too rigid, but it remains true that dramatic poetry marked an important shift in Greek views on the nature of poetry, as discussed by Finkelberg (1998) 176–81 (quoting the famous Gorgias passage at 177).

at the Thesmophoria (765–84) preserves a parody of the event which featured Palamedes' brother Oeax writing a message on oars in the hope that one will reach his father Nauplius with news of the betrayal and murder.[40] Nauplius receives the message and we know of his response from various sources. He goes to Troy to seek justice. When he finds none, he returns to Greece and encourages the wives of the Greek leaders to commit adultery, and later uses beacons to lure the returning Greek ships onto the rocks to their destruction.[41] Communication with Nauplius in *written form*, however, must have been a Euripidean innovation, since the Aristophanic parody focuses entirely on the exercise of writing. In Aristophanes, the In-law, hoping that Euripides will arrive, decides to use the trick from his *Palamedes* to send a message, using tablets instead of oars since he has none at hand. He inscribes the message on stage, claims to have difficulty incising the letter *rhō*, and then flings the tablets in all directions (*Thesm.* 776–84). It is not conceivable that Oeax wrote on stage in Euripides' tragedy, nor that he was shown throwing his oars into the sea.[42] It *is* possible, however, that Oeax in Euripides performed a lyric lament connected with his written message, as does the In-law in Aristophanes.[43] This might have been metapoetically suggestive of scripted performance if the lament reflected the text of the written message. What the Aristophanic parody *does* confirm is that Euripides' *Palamedes* explored the issue of writing in an entirely new and identifiably Euripidean way.[44]

Writing in Euripides' *Palamedes* functions both to control the direction of the plot, through the forged letter, and to resolve the narrative, through the message which ensures that Palamedes' death

[40] See Austin and Olson (2004) *ad* 770–1 and lviii–lx. Jenkins (2006) 24 and n. 14 observes that Oeax's name, meaning 'Rudder', suggests an ability to steer his message to the correct recipient.

[41] The *Palamedes* of Aeschylus included the arrival of Nauplius at Troy (fr. 181) as did the *Palamedes* of Euripides (see Luppe (2004) 217–18). The revenge of Nauplius was the subject of Sophocles' *Nauplius Sails In* (*Katapleōn*) and *Nauplius the Fire-Starter* (*Pyrkaeus*) (see Lloyd-Jones (2003) 218–25 and Sommerstein (2010) 250–8). Jenkins (2006) 24 notes that Sophocles credits Palamedes with the invention of beacon fires which Nauplius uses to effect his revenge.

[42] Cf. Sommerstein (2001*a*) *ad Thesm.* 776–84.

[43] Cf. Hall (2006) 309 with n. 77.

[44] Dobrov (2001) 37–50 shows how 'Aristophanes was especially interested in innovative moments' (160) in his 'contrafacts' of Euripidean tragedies (where 'contrafact' is a term borrowed from music theory and deemed a preferable substitute for the term 'parody').

is avenged. As such it is implicitly reflective of the art of tragic scriptwriting, and it seems important in this context that Palamedes, the inventor of writing, is possessed of poetic skill. He is described by the chorus as 'that all-wise nightingale of the Muses' (fr. 588: *πάνσοφον . . . ἀηδόνα μουσᾶν*), and must be one of the friends of *mousikē* 'the arts of the Muses' referred to in fr. 580.[45] Palamedes as a figure is thus emblematic of the tension inherent in dramatic poetry. He is both the nightingale, symbol of oral song,[46] and the founding father of a skill which supplants the improvised nature of oral song with a prescribed script. He perishes because he fails to make the connection between (poetic) fiction and the power of writing. The irony of Palamedes' fate in Euripides is well captured by a further Aristophanic parody. When Dionysus in *Frogs* calls Euripides 'Palamedes' (1451) it obviously foreshadows the fact that Euripides' wit and ingenuity will not save him at the end of the comedy. Like his own Palamedes, Euripides' defeat is effected with one of his own creations when Dionysus rejects him with an infamous line from *Hippolytus* (612) and chooses to bring Aeschylus and his poetry back to save Athens instead.

PERFORMING TEXT, REWRITING MYTH: *HIPPOLYTUS*

It is perhaps Euripides' *Hippolytus* which is best known for its engagement with writing, notably through the suicide letter written by Phaedra to her husband Theseus where she falsely accuses her stepson Hippolytus of an attempted seduction. Although it was Phaedra who had been afflicted with passion for Hippolytus by Cypris Aphrodite's wiles, Theseus believes the written accusation and curses his son who dies as a result. The story pattern can be related to that of Bellerophon, who as early as the *Iliad* (6.155–70) was sent by means of a treacherous message on an impossible mission to kill the Chimaera (which he miraculously survived), after his hostess Stheneboea conceived a passion for him which he did not

[45] Cf. Collard and Cropp (2008) viii. 55 *ad Palamedes* fr. 580 n. 1 and Scodel (1980) 51.
[46] On the bird as a symbol of the poet and of song in archaic Greek poetry, see Nünlist (1998) 39–54.

reciprocate.[47] Euripides dramatized the story in his *Stheneboea*, but although a letter seems to have featured in his play, unfortunately no evidence survives concerning how it was manipulated.[48] We do know that the title character of Euripides' *Stheneboea* and the Phaedra of an earlier (now lost) *Hippolytus* play (*Hippolytus Veiled*) were fodder for Aristophanes' joke that Euripides was fond of putting whores on stage (*Frogs* 1043–55).[49]

The extant *Hippolytus* (*the Garland-Bearer*) is remarkable in being a rare example of a tragedian rewriting one of his own earlier (and apparently unpopular) dramas.[50] In fact, Euripides seems to have addressed the issue of Phaedra's unsavoury character later ridiculed in *Frogs*. In the earlier *Hippolytus Veiled*, she seems to have made inappropriate advances on Hippolytus in person (cf. fr. 430 where Eros is her teacher of daring).[51] In the new play, Euripides makes her unwilling to disclose her affliction of passion. She is betrayed by her Nurse (cf. *Hipp.* 589–91), who reveals the secret to Hippolytus, and Emily McDermott has discussed how Euripides may have been alluding self-consciously to his earlier *Hippolytus*, especially through his portrayal of the Nurse and his manipulation of the theme of *eros* as a disease.[52] Phaedra now sees death as her only way out

[47] It is unclear whether the message referred to in the *Iliad* is written as a text or is made of up other kinds of pictorial symbols or codes. Graziosi and Haubold (2010) conclude *ad* 168–70: 'The overall impression is that Proitos uses, or even invents, a nasty trick very close to writing.'

[48] See Jouan and Van Looy (2002) 1–27, Kannicht (2004) 645–56, Collard and Cropp (2008) viii. 121–41; Taplin (2007) 201–4 discusses 4th-cent. vase paintings representing the exchange of the letter which may be related to the performance of Euripides' *Stheneboea*. Svendsen (1984) 78–9 detects similarities in the stories of Bellerophon and Shakespeare's Hamlet.

[49] See Sommerstein (1996*b*) *ad* 1043.

[50] Cf. W. Barrett (1964) 13, who suggests that Euripides must have been frustrated by the first *Hippolytus*' lack of success, especially if Sophocles' *Phaedra* had been produced in the meantime and had been successful. We return to the issue of playwrights revising or rewriting their plays in Ch. 5.

[51] The majority consensus among scholars is that the extant *Hippolytus* is the later drama. This is implied by the play's Hypothesis written by Aristophanes of Byzantium, which says that the tragedy corrected objectionable improprieties from the earlier play. Gibert (1997) followed by Hutchinson (2004) and Zwierlein (2004) questioned the reliability of the Hypothesis for dating the lost *Hippolytus* before the extant one, however most scholars have accepted the implications of the Hypothesis as sound, and all objections to it are persuasively addressed by Talboy and Sommerstein (2006) 254–72, who show that *Hippolytus Veiled* must certainly have been the earlier play.

[52] McDermott (2000).

(*Hipp.* 599–600) and her accusation of Hippolytus in the suicide letter stems both from a desire to preserve her honour and from a wish that Hippolytus should suffer for vaunting over her misfortunes (*Hipp.* 715–31). The letter, then, is crucial to the creation of the new plot and has far more dramatic agency than did the letter of the earlier *Hippolytus Veiled*. In the first play, a letter seems to have featured at some point in the narrative. Having been rejected by Hippolytus, Phaedra writes a letter to Theseus accusing Hippolytus of seduction, which causes Theseus to return from his journey abroad.[53] It is possible that the letter featured as a stage property, but the physical presence of the letter was not essential for the plot to unfold and it might not have appeared on stage.[54] This is in marked contrast to Euripides' second *Hippolytus* play whose plot is propelled in a new direction by the force of Phaedra's letter once it has been discovered.

The written text thus creates a new script in the extant *Hippolytus*. Theseus himself draws attention to the fact that the letter symbolizes the communication of something *neon* 'new' (*Hipp.* 857). The articulation of the letter's message reflects the important tension inherent in the identification of writing as metaphorical speech.[55] On the shields of Aeschylus' *Seven Against Thebes*, the carved *figures* were conceived of as 'shouting' their inscribed messages. In *Hippolytus*, the written word itself is presented as a disembodied voice. When Theseus discovers Phaedra's body and suicide note, he asks (*Hipp.* 857) if the letter wishes to signify (*sēmēnai*) something new (*neon*) and opens it to *see* what it will *tell* him (*Hipp.* 865: *ἴδω τί λέξαι*). Once the note has been opened, Theseus claims that 'the letter cries aloud, cries aloud' (*Hipp.* 877: *βοᾷ βοᾷ δέλτος*). He says that he has *seen a* (terrible) *song voiced through writing* (*Hipp.* 879–80: *οἷον οἷον εἶδον γραφαῖς μέλος | φθεγγόμενον*). The choice of expression to describe the written message is remarkably suggestive of the process of producing dramatic poetry itself. What is a tragic performance if not a *song*

[53] See Hutchinson (2004) 21, Zwierlein (2004) 71–8, and Talboy and Sommerstein (2006) 258.

[54] Zwierlein (2004) 71–8 argues that the letter was sent within the action of the play, but Sommerstein and Talboy (2006) 258 with n. 27 provide convincing arguments suggesting that the letter formed part of the 'back-story' narrated in the prologue.

[55] This is particularly significant for *Hippolytus* where the dynamics of communication, both written and spoken, are crucial to the dynamics of the drama, on which see esp. C. Segal (1992).

(poetry composed in metre) *voiced* (performed) *through writing* (i.e. a script)?[56] Theseus may enter the drama metatheatrically as a spectator (*theōros*), as Froma Zeitlin has demonstrated,[57] but he quickly becomes a performer. Edith Hall has argued that the scene of Theseus' discovery of Phaedra's body and letter is technically unusual in being a rare example of an adult Athenian male given lyric song in tragic performance. She suggests that the pattern of alternating two lines of dochmiacs with two lines of iambic trimeter at *Hipp.* 817–51 internalizes within Theseus a pattern normally distributed between two characters, where one (usually choral or female) would sing the lyric portion and the other (often male) would respond in spoken trimeters.[58] This pattern is broken, however, on Theseus' discovery of the letter and its contents at *Hipp.* 874–90 when he sings seven consecutive lines of lyrics from 877 to 884, interrupted only by a one-line interjection from the chorus, reverting to iambic trimeters at 885–90, when he tells of the letter's accusation of his son and calls down his father Poseidon's curse on Hippolytus. That the text of the letter produces both sung lyric and iambic trimeter is once again reflective of the metaphor of text as script, particularly in the context of the irregularity of this lyric and iambic sequence within the tragic genre. Just as Theseus claims to *see a song* in the text before him, he simultaneously *performs a song* and alternates lyric song with spoken trimeters.

Earlier in the play, the connection between writing and poetry had been made explicitly by Phaedra's Nurse: 'Those who *have* (ἔχουσιν) the *graphai* (writings) of the ancients (*palaiteroi*), and are themselves always in the company of the Muses, *know* (ἴσασι) that Zeus once lusted for union with Semele' (*Hipp.* 451–4).[59] The association of

[56] My argument here can be read (in part) as a response to the brief suggestion made by C. Segal (1985) 220 where he wonders (but does not fully explore) whether the *dissai phōnai* 'two voices' which Theseus seeks to distinguish at *Hipp.* 925–31 along with Phaedra's 'shouting' tablet should be taken as an implication of the 'two voices' of Euripides' 'own art of fictional representation, the verbal and the scenic, the silent organizing text in the background and the spoken or sung utterances of the fully realized performance'.

[57] Zeitlin (1996) 264–5.

[58] Hall (2006) 288–320, esp. 308–9, 314–15.

[59] It is only fair to mention here that scholars disagree on whether the *graphai* at *Hipp.* 451–4 refer to texts or paintings, although *graphai* certainly refer to written poetry elsewhere in Euripides at *IA* 797–800, discussed below. Easterling (1985) 6 accepts *IA* 797–800 as a reference to written literature but suggests (n. 26) that the

graphai with fixed poetic knowledge prefigures and confirms the fixity and finality of the *graphai* in Phaedra's letter for creating a new poetic script.[60] The new *graphai* enable the creation of a new *mythos* or 'fiction' in a process confirmed by Artemis in the *exodos*, where she exonerates Theseus by equating Phaedra's *false mythoi* (*Hipp.* 1288 ψεύδεσι μύθοις, cf. μῦθος at 1314), with her *false graphai* (*Hipp.* 1310: ψευδεῖς γραφάς). It is clear that the term *mythos* has strong implications of mythological storytelling in these passages. Artemis' statement provides a structural answer to Cypris Aphrodite's claim in the prologue that the events of the play will demonstrate the truth of the *mythoi* concerning the destruction of those who do not honour her (*Hipp.* 5–9). This statement obviously refers to familiar mythological stories about such destruction.[61] That *Hippolytus* is presenting its audience with a new *mythos* is something that Euripides might well have wished to underline, not so much because of previous treatments by other poets in this case, but because of his own earlier *Hippolytus* play which had been unpopular.

That the text in *Hippolytus* symbolizes a new *mythos* might at first suggest that the Nurse is confused in her implicit contrast of *mythoi* and *graphai* in the first half of the play. While she hails poetic

graphai in *Hipp.* may refer to paintings rather than writings. Hall (2006) 112 with n. 50 follows Easterling in reading a reference to painting, though she remains sensitive to the 'analogy between paintings and poems' in the passage. It seems to me that in a play where writing is a central motif, it is unlikely that *graphai* (in the plural) should elsewhere refer to Phaedra's letter (*Hipp.* 879, 1311) but to painting in this one instance. W. Barrett (1964) *ad Hipp.* 451–2 and Goff (1990) 97–8 present convincing arguments for understanding writing rather than painting in this passage. Alan Sommerstein points out to me that the verb ἔχουσιν 'they have' at *Hipp.* 451 is definitively suggestive of writing since one does not need to own a painting to view it while we know that there were book-collectors in the 5th cent., including Euripides himself. Goff (1990) 99 and C. Segal (1992) 436 go so far as to argue that the apparent reference to pornographic painting at *Hipp.* 1005 (*graphē* in the singular) could well be a reference to writing, but painting seems more likely here as Hippolytus claims his aversion to such sights (1005–6).

[60] Even *if* the *graphai* referred to by the Nurse are meant to suggest paintings, the association with fixity and authority remains; note also the concept of *seeing graphai*, whether a painting (*Hipp.* 1004) or a text (*Hipp.* 879–90).

[61] Examples from early sources include Tyndareus who forgot to sacrifice to her and is given adulterous daughters as a result (Stesich. *PMG* 223), and Smyrna who rejected Aphrodite and is made to conceive a passion for her father (fr. 27 *PEG* with Gantz (1993) 730). In the *Homeric Hymn to Aphrodite* (45–55) Zeus causes Aphrodite to fall in love with Anchises so that she would share in the same kind of humiliation she inflicted on other gods, in whom she had kindled desire for mortals.

graphai as sources of firm knowledge (*Hipp.* 451–4, quoted above), she had dismissed *mythoi* as being 'aimless' (*Hipp.* 197 ἄλλως). The conclusion provided by Artemis, however, shows that writing (*graphai*) and myths (*mythoi*) have one and the same function when it comes to tragic dénouement. The purposelessness attributed to *mythoi* by the Nurse is conversely attributed to writing by Theseus, when he accuses Hippolytus of honouring 'the vapours (*kapnoi*) of many [Orphic] writings (*grammata*)' (*Hipp.* 954).[62] The two passages are connected by their contexts. Humans are aimlessly borne along by *mythoi* because, according to the Nurse, we have no experience of another life and matters of the nether world have not been revealed to us (*Hipp.* 195–7).[63] In the case of the Orphic writings, which contained information on obtaining a pleasurable afterlife,[64] their presentation as 'vapours' suggests a rejection of what they revealed. Of course the irony of Theseus' treating writing as *kapnos* 'smoke', 'vapour', is pointed indeed since he has just been completely persuaded by the fixity of a written text. The contrast is representative of the possible uses of writing and *mythoi* for cosmological purposes on the one hand (vaporous and purposeless), and for literary purposes on the other hand (creative and novel). So the Nurse's rejection of cosmological *mythoi* and her validation of poetic *graphai* conform to the broader pattern suggested by Theseus' attitudes to two different kinds of writing. The true cosmological secrets of the Underworld and the afterlife are ultimately unknowable regardless of texts and myths. Tragedy, on the other hand, has the power to create its own fiction both through writing and through myth, two forms of poetic expression which become interdependent through the dramatic medium.[65] The interdependence of *mythoi* and *graphai* for dramatic purposes is confirmed in *Hippolytus* by the fact that it

[62] It is clear that this is meant as an insult and that Hippolytus is not actually an Orphic. See W. Barrett (1964) *ad* 952–5 and Linforth (1941) 57–9.

[63] Cf. W. Barrett (1964) 198 on the connection between the aimless tales and our ignorance of nether-worldly affairs at *Hipp.* 195–7, though overall Barrett feels that the scene would work better dramatically without *Hipp.* 191–7 and suggests the lines may not be genuine.

[64] Cf. Pl. *Rep.* 364e–365a, W. Barrett (1964) *ad* 952–5, D. Steiner (1994) 197–201.

[65] Identifying the different *kinds* of *mythoi* and *graphai* in this play thus helps to make sense of the 'two opposing views of myth, one that suggests stability and transcendence, one that conversely denies such qualities' (Goff (1990) 92).

is through writing (*graphai*) that Phaedra's story (*mythos* cf. *Hipp.* 609) can be successfully rewritten, and win first prize.[66]

CONTROLLING FICTION IN *IPHIGENIA AMONG THE TAURIANS*

If writing is a new metaphor for creating poetic fiction in Euripides, then weaving is the old metaphor it rivals. Charles Segal intuitively suggested in a brief discussion of *Iphigenia among the Taurians* that Euripides 'locates his tragic version of the myths between a newer, written technology of communication, indicated in the "letters" (*grammata*) of the tablet, and an older, more traditional form, symbolized by the age-old art of weaving, which is itself an ancient and traditional metaphor for the telling of tales in an oral culture'.[67] In what follows I develop the suggestion that writing and weaving are opposed as metaphors for creative composition in the *IT*, and propose a new conclusion based on this opposition. Where Euripides had allowed Phaedra to control her own fiction in *Hippolytus*, giving her the role of author of a new script, he does not allow Iphigenia the same privilege. Although apparently in control of the script, Iphigenia is ultimately unable to rewrite the course of events. Although she is a skilled weaver who attempts to create a new *mythos*, she is fated to be circumscribed by the weavings imposed on her in her cult *aition* and fails to remain in control of her story. This failure is, I argue, inextricably linked to Iphigenia's relationship with writing.

The letter in *IT* precipitates the recognition scene between Iphigenia and her brother in the land of the Taurians. After discovering that the two young men she must prepare for sacrifice are Argive, Iphigenia (the officiating priestess) decides to let one of them go free if he will take her letter back to Argos (which explains that she is not dead and needs to be rescued) and . . . give it to Orestes (*IT* 578–776)! The request is easily fulfilled when Pylades hands the letter over to Orestes. Since there are no physical recognition proofs in *IT*, the physicality of the letter functions as a substitute and tangible proof

[66] The extant *Hippolytus*, produced in 428 BC, was one of Euripides' few tragic victories. See W. Barrett (1964) 29.

[67] C. Segal (1985) 223 and see Ch. 1, pp. 16–18, 26–8, 40–1.

of identity through its written message. Using a letter to effect a recognition scene seems to have been an entirely new way of approaching this stock literary device, and the moment when Iphigenia handed the letter to Pylades became a popular image in vase paintings.[68] There is no weaving produced (as in Aeschylus' *Libation Bearers*), no ring (as in Sophocles' *Electra*), no scar (as in Euripides' *Electra*). Familial recognition proofs are discussed *orally* only in *IT*. Orestes demonstrates knowledge of four family issues, which convince Iphigenia that he really is her brother, as was discussed in more detail in Chapter 1. First, he knows of 'fine-textured weavings' (*IT* 814: εὐπήνοις ὑφαῖς) that Iphigenia embroidered with the story of the ancient quarrel between Atreus and Thyestes. Then there is the lustral water Clytemnestra sent for Iphigenia's wedding, and the lock of hair Iphigenia sent home in return. Finally, Orestes knows that the ancient spear of Pelops is hidden in the maidens' apartments in Argos (*IT* 815–26). A piece of weaving, a lock of hair, and an offering of lustral water from Clytemnestra all feature in the recognition scene of Aeschylus' *Libation Bearers*. A weapon too is an important marker of identity in tragedy.[69] What is striking, then, is that the physicality of traditional recognition tokens is removed in this play. They become circumscribed to orality and are superseded in terms of dramatic importance by the presence of the written text, since without the letter there would be no recognition.

In Euripides, *Electra*, the title character adopted a uniquely passive role in the recognition sequence, as we saw in Chapter 1. This forms a strong contrast to Iphigenia's active attempts to contact Orestes by sending him a letter.[70] Iphigenia's letter, then, symbolizes her active attempt to control her own *mythos*. Indeed the circumstances in which the letter was written seem so contrived as to invite audience reflection on that process. After bringing the letter out from the temple, Iphigenia explains that it was written for her by a Greek

[68] See *LIMC* V.2 plates 19–25 with details provided by Lilly Kahil at *LIMC* V.1, 714–15.

[69] Theseus was recognized by his sword in Euripides' lost *Aegeus*. In *Libation Bearers* Orestes draws attention to a bloodstain caused by 'Aegisthus' sword' (1011) as evidence of Clytemnestra's guilt. Compare also the bow of Heracles which is an important stage property in extant tragedy (e.g. E. *Her.*, S. *Phil.*), and see Papadopoulou (2005) 137–51 for further discussion.

[70] Compare Electra in Sophocles who claims to have received deceptive messages from Orestes, *El.* 169–70.

captive who pitied her (*IT* 584–7). Since then she has had no one who could take it back to Argos for her (*IT* 588–90), because, of course, all Greek captives among the Tauri are sacrificed to Artemis, including the author of the letter. Why all this convoluted explanation of how Iphigenia came into possession of the letter? The point underlined is that Iphigenia did not write the letter herself, *she is unable to write* (in contrast to Phaedra).[71] Furthermore, she does not read the letter either, although she repeats its contents (*IT* 760–1). She seems to be completely illiterate. The significance of this fact becomes apparent when we consider the convergence of myth manipulation and plot construction in this play. Iphigenia's verbal attempts to control the outcome of the plot succeed for a while but ultimately fail. In the last third of the play the theme of fictionality is developed through use of the term *mythos* 'fiction'. In a play where normally reliable *logoi* 'accounts' are shown to be deceptive,[72] it is not surprising to see that *mythoi* 'fictions' become more important as the drama progresses. The term *mythos* is used five times in the play (*IT* 900, 1049, 1078, 1293, 1442), and each of its uses is related to the unexpected dénouement of the drama. It seems clear, therefore, that *mythos* implies 'fiction' rather than straightforward 'speech' in all of these cases. The term *mythos* acts as a reminder of the drama's own existence as a fictional construct, as we have already seen in the cases of *Phoenician Women*, *Hippolytus*, and other Euripidean plays (discussed below).[73]

At *IT* 563 Iphigenia had asked: 'What about the daughter who was sacrificed? Is there any *logos* about her?' Orestes' response confirms that Iphigenia has been all but forgotten by the Greeks. 'None', he says, 'except that she died and is no longer alive' (*IT* 564). Orestes is reluctant to discuss his past in this scene (*IT* 495, 500, 506, 546,

[71] Cole (1981) is cautious in her conclusions on literacy among women in ancient Greece, although she gathers much evidence to suggest that many were. Why can Phaedra write but not Iphigenia? The chorus of *Medea* (1085–9) say that few women among many have access to a Muse. The context has more to do with inspiration in a general sense than with writing, but it does imply that some women had access to the arts (by whatever means) while others did not. Another possibility is Phaedra's status as a mature (i.e. married) woman. Clytemnestra, another mature woman, is presumably to be imagined as reading Agamemnon's first letter in *IA*. Iphigenia, by contrast, is the maiden *par excellence*.

[72] See Wright (2005) esp. 285–97.

[73] Already in the *Odyssey* the term *mythos* is inextricably involved in the discourse of tension between fiction and reality through tale-telling. See esp. Goldhill (1991) 61–8.

554) but he relents and answers each of Iphigenia's questions concerning the end of the Trojan War, and the fate of Agamemnon and his family (*IT* 508–68). His matter-of-fact description of events is perfunctorily accurate, even if he remains evasive regarding his own identity as Agamemnon's son (*IT* 500, 568). Orestes' statement about Iphigenia reveals that the established *logos* does not reflect her actual fate, since she is not dead. The recognition scene has revealed that she is a skilled weaver (*IT* 814–17) and this clearly anticipates Iphigenia's plotting of an escape plan, an attempt to create her own *mythos*, her own 'fiction'. In contrast to Creusa in *Ion* (1419), whose weaving is incomplete and whose plan comes unravelled, Iphigenia's weaving is elaborate (*IT* 811–15, cf. 190–8) and her plan is entirely successful until Poseidon pushes the Greek ship back to land (*IT* 1395–7, 1414–18). The prologue and the *parodos* (which Iphigenia sings in antiphonal response to the chorus) both emphasize Iphigenia's preoccupation with her fate. As she considers her fate at the end of the *parodos*, she implicitly compares herself to heroines from earlier Euripidean plays. Like her sister Electra, Iphigenia was courted by Greek suitors, but does not now sing for Hera in Argos (*El.* 21, 171–80 cf. *IT* 208, 221). Like the Trojan captive Hecuba who is ἄπολις ἄτεκνος 'city-less, childless' (*Tro.* 1186; cf. 1313), and ἄπαις ἄνανδρος ἄπολις 'childless, man-less, city-less' (*Hec.* 669), Iphigenia is ἄγαμος ἄτεκνος ἄπολις ἄφιλος 'marriage-less, childless, city-less, friendless' (*IT* 220). Like the chorus of Trojan Women in *Hecuba* (466–74), Iphigenia is deprived of the privilege of weaving the story of Athena and the Titans into the *peplos* (robe) for Athena (*IT* 222–4).[74]

[74] The detail of the weaving for Athena is intriguing since it was not, of course, the battle of the Titans which was woven on the *peplos* for Athena, but that of the Giants (see Barber (1992) 115–16 and Ridgway (1992) 123). Scholars have explained the anomaly by suggesting that the Titans and Giants are 'conflated' in Euripides (cf. Collard (1991) *ad Hec.* 466–74, Gregory (1999) *ad Hec.* 472, Cropp (2000) *ad* 222–4, Kyriakou (2006) *ad* 221–4). It is possible, however, that the mistaken designation of the Titans in Euripides is deliberate, rather than confused, and that it serves a significant literary purpose. In *Hecuba* the mistake would underline the pathos of the captive women's delusion in thinking that they would ever become part of this Athenian national festival. If the *IT* passage alludes to the earlier *Hecuba*, it similarly underlines Iphigenia's deluded hopes of reintegration into Greek society. See Stamatopoulou (2012) and cf. Tzanetou (2000) 201–9, who shows that Iphigenia's return to Greece to serve at Brauron is merely an illusion of reintegration.

These implicit comparisons make us consider Iphigenia's place in poetic mythology and help to contextualize her active attempt to take control of her *mythos* in the final third of the play. She resolves to persuade the barbarian king Thoas 'with fictions' (*IT* 1049: μύθοις) to let her go to the sea with Orestes and Pylades so that they can get to the ship and escape. Her fictions will exploit the true *logos* of Orestes' pollution caused by matricide (cf. *IT* 939: λέγοιμ' ἄν). She will pretend that Orestes and Pylades have touched the statue of Artemis and that all three must be purified in the sea (*IT* 1031–41). Iphigenia initially seems to be in control of the fictions she creates, just as she is in control of the stage space.[75] She successfully involves the chorus in maintaining her fictions, and hopes that they will benefit from these *mythoi* (*IT* 1078: ὄναισθε μύθων).[76] When Iphigenia's *mythos* is uncovered and the messenger races on stage with the news of the trio's attempted escape with the statue of Artemis, the chorus actively attempt to divert him with the suggestion that he is telling 'an incredible fiction (*apiston mython*)' (*IT* 1293). The 'unbelievable fiction' is precisely what Iphigenia has constructed, but she loses control of the fiction when the Taurians uncover her deception (just as she loses physical control over events when she is afraid of wetting her foot in the sea and must rely on Orestes to carry her to the ship, *IT* 1380–5). The chorus fail in their attempt to prevent the messenger from reaching Thoas with the news, and their failure reflects Iphigenia's simultaneous loss of control over the fiction she has created.

With the arrival of Athena *ex machina* control over dramatic events is taken out of the hands of the mortal characters and it is

[75] Like Clytemnestra in *Ag.* (on which see Taplin (1978) 33–5), Iphigenia controls the doorway throughout the play until she leaves the stage. Her control over the male characters at the very point of leaving is emphatic: Orestes, Pylades, and Thoas all have their heads covered and are in Iphigenia's hands (cf. *IT* 1207, 1218).

[76] Will the chorus benefit from Iphigenia's fictions? The play is silent about the fate of the chorus. As captive Greek maidens and temple servants, their fate mirrors Iphigenia's. At *IT* 1067–8 Iphigenia promises to save them and take them back to Greece should she survive her escape attempt. They are not provided for in the play's *exodos*, and it has been argued that their fate was addressed in a lacuna at *IT* 1469, where Athena may have announced arrangements for their return to Greece (see Cropp (2000) *ad* 1469). It is also possible that they are left behind, as are the chorus of women attending Helen in *Helen*. If no provision was made for the chorus, their separation from Iphigenia may have been inspired by parthenaic song, as suggested by Swift (2010) 195–6.

Athena herself who predicts the *mythos* (*IT* 1442). Iphigenia's inability to rewrite her *mythos* is confirmed by Athena, who explains that she is fated to remain in the service of Artemis in Brauron (*IT* 1462–3). In other words, she will never get back to Argos, and she will never marry. Human inability to control the *mythos* is linked in this play with an inability to write for oneself. Olympian gods do not need writing to exert authority and do not seem to be literate in Greek sources. The only exception to this general rule is Athena, interestingly.[77] She is depicted by the Triptolemus painter on a red-figure amphora dated *c.*480 BC holding a stylus in her right hand and an open writing tablet in her left.[78] It seems logical that the Athenian goddess of weaving would also be skilled at writing, in a society of growing levels of literacy where writing could be conceived of as the 'new weaving'. Although the illiterate Iphigenia had been the active creator of 'fine-textured weavings' (*IT* 814: εὐπήνοις ὑφαῖς), she has been unable to weave a new destiny for herself. She will no longer be an active weaver, but will become the passive recipient of the 'fine-textured weavings' of others (*IT* 1465: εὐπήνους ὑφάς). Her fate thus parallels that of Orestes, a puppet of the gods, notoriously unable to control his own fate, who had been protected by Pylades earlier in the play with 'fine-textured weavings' (*IT* 312: εὐπήνους ὑφάς).[79] The repetition of the same expression three times in the play underlines Iphigenia's transformation from active creator to passive subject. The imposition of weaving on Iphigenia as predicted in the *exodos* functions as a metaphor for her lack of control over her own story. These issues are intrinsically connected with Iphigenia's inability to write. If written texts are associated with successful plot creation, then Iphigenia's illiteracy prefigures her inability to see her plan through to its conclusion, for all her skill at old-fashioned weaving.

[77] Henrichs (2003) 38–9, who also observes that of the non-Olympians the Muses and Dike are associated with writing. A passage overlooked by Henrichs is *Ion* 442–3 where Ion refers to the gods as having written laws for men. However, as shown by Wolff (1965) 185, this passage is one of several designed to emphasize Ion's lack of knowledge.

[78] *LIMC* I.2 *s.v.* 'Athena', pl. 616, discussed by Henrichs (2003) 39.

[79] For a detailed discussion of other ways in which the fates of Iphigenia and Orestes run parallel courses, see Sansone (1975*a*).

THE CONSTRAINTS OF MYTHOLOGY IN *IPHIGENIA AT AULIS*

The nexus of ideas linking Iphigenia's fate, the power of the written text to control the plot, and the attempt by characters within that plot to control their respective *mythoi* returns in Euripides' *Iphigenia at Aulis*, but with a different agenda.[80] The characters in the *IA* are more concerned with asserting, questioning, or rejecting traditional *mythoi* than with creating new ones. In this 'prequel' to the *Oresteia*, Euripides provides Clytemnestra with the psychological motivation needed to explain her heinous crimes in Aeschylus' *Agamemnon*. Agamemnon is cast as a violent child-murderer, who had forcibly taken Clytemnestra as wife by murdering her first husband and hurling their baby to the ground after tearing it from her breast (*IA* 1148–52).[81] In sacrificing Iphigenia, Agamemnon thus repeats a known pattern of behaviour,[82] and causes Clytemnestra to reach breaking point in suffering the loss of a child at his hands for a second time.

Clytemnestra attempts to reject the *mythos* of Iphigenia's sacrifice when Agamemnon's plans are revealed (*IA* 874 *ἀπέπτυσ' . . . μῦθον*, literally 'I spit out the *mythos*'), but the sacrifice takes place with Iphigenia's eventual consent. When Iphigenia asks her mother not to hate Agamemnon (*IA* 1454–5), and Clytemnestra replies 'he must run dread contests (*agōnes*) because of you', it directly evokes Clytemnestra's speech at the revelation of her murder at *Agamemnon* 1377–8: 'This contest (*agōn*) has been in my mind for a long time, arising from a long-standing grievance; and it has come to pass, at long last.'[83] The allusion asserts the validity of poetic events in

[80] This is not the place to rehash arguments over the vexed issue of possible interpolations in the *IA*. The reader is referred to Stockert (1992) who defends many of the passages considered to be interpolations by other editors. I treat the extant text as Euripidean for the purposes of this discussion.

[81] There is little evidence for this tradition outside Euripides. On the identity of Clytemnestra's first husband, see Gantz (1993) 549–50 and Gibert (2005) 229 and 241 n. 7.

[82] Cf. Griffin (1990) 146.

[83] That Iphigenia's slaughter is the long-standing grievance is made clear through Clytemnestra's justifications of her actions at *Ag.* 1414–18 and in her oath invoking first the Justice that was due for her child, then *Atē* and the Fury who helped her achieve her revenge (*Ag.* 1431–3). Cf. Zeitlin (1965) 477 who discusses these lines to show that Agamemnon's murder was 'no unpremeditated act'.

Aeschylus, as does Clytemnestra's rejection of the final *mythos* of the *IA*—the apparent salvation of Iphigenia in the spurious ending. Although the transmitted ending (*IA* 1578–1629) is certainly not by Euripides and was either interpolated or revised by a Byzantine hand,[84] it seems worth noting that Clytemnestra calls the report of Iphigenia's miraculous escape 'vain fictions (*mythoi*)' (*IA* 1617–18). Is it a story fabricated to ease Clytemnestra's grief? The chorus say that Agamemnon will tell her 'the same story (*mythos*)' (*IA* 1620), but Clytemnestra's silence confirms that she does not believe it.

Whatever conclusions we draw about the problematic ending, it is clear that Agamemnon seriously considers creating a new *mythos* in the *IA*, one in which Iphigenia is not sacrificed. Indeed, more than any other play the *IA* raises questions about the challenges of rewriting what has already been written within the constraints of traditional mythology. The opening scene in which Agamemnon fretfully writes and rewrites a letter to Clytemnestra is reminiscent of a literary composer drafting and redrafting his work, and Helene Foley has commented insightfully on the metatheatrical quality of this image where 'Agamemnon as a writer or rewriter of myth functions for a moment as the poet's double'.[85] There are, of course, two letters at work in the *IA*. Agamemnon has already sent a letter to Clytemnestra, outside dramatic time, with instructions that Iphigenia is to come to the army camp to be married to Achilles, when in fact his plan is to sacrifice her to Artemis so that the Greeks can sail to Troy. Having regretted his decision, Agamemnon then writes a second letter—the one we see on stage—whose purpose is to cancel out the first. The second letter, however, is intercepted by Menelaus and never reaches Clytemnestra.

The first letter thus symbolizes established tragic myth, while the second represents an attempt at subverting or rewriting that tradition, and it seems important that Agamemnon's role as the poet's doublet coincides with an apparently strong element of choice at Agamemnon's disposal in this play, where abandoning the expedition is presented as a real possibility.[86] From the outset, Agamemnon's

[84] On which, see esp. West (1981) 73–6.

[85] Foley (1985) 94, cf. Michelakis (2006) 50.

[86] Agamemnon's ultimate decision to sacrifice Iphigenia is problematized in various ways: by Menelaus' change of mind regarding the sacrifice, by the suggestion that the women could be sent away in secret (*IA* 516), and by Agamemnon's fear of Odysseus as apparent motivation for the sacrifice (*IA* 517, 522–35). See Gibert (1995)

letters are part of a new *mythos* 'story' underlined by the old servant's queries about what is 'new' (*neon IA* 43, cf. 2) and his request that Agamemnon share the *mythos* with him (*IA* 44), just as Agamemnon writes and rewrites his second letter. Agamemnon's response suggests the potential for doubting existing mythology. When he relates the Judgment of Paris, he adds a parenthetical 'so the story (*mythos*) goes among men' (*IA* 72: ὡς ὁ μῦθος ἀνθρώπων ἔχει). We are invited to question such *mythoi* just as the characters in the drama metapoetically raise questions about their own *mythoi*.

The futility of Clytemnestra's rejection of the sacrifice-*mythos* can be read in connection with Menelaus' assertion of his own *mythos*. When Agamemnon responds to the Old Man's cries that Menelaus has wrenched the letter from his hands, Menelaus balks 'It is *my mythos*, not his, which has more right to be told.' (*IA* 318: οὐμὸς οὐχ ὁ τοῦδε μῦθος κυριώτερος λέγειν). Of course, in the immediate context, Menelaus is referring to his story concerning the letter. However, since failure to sacrifice Iphigenia would lead to an abandonment of the expedition to retrieve Helen, Agamemnon's letter actually represents a wholesale attempt to alter Menelaus' established mythology. Use of the term *mythos* here shows Menelaus fighting to retain his traditional mythology. When Agamemnon defends his decision *not* to sacrifice Iphigenia, the chorus comment that 'these [*mythoi*] are different from the *mythoi* previously told' (*IA* 402–3: οἵδ' αὖ διάφοροι τῶν πάρος λελεγμένων | μύθων). Again two levels of meaning are apparent. On the level of the internal drama the *mythos* of sparing Iphigenia is clearly different from the original decision to lure her to Aulis. On a reflective metapoetic level, however, the new *mythoi* under discussion make us consider the extent to which established mythology can be rewritten. If Iphigenia is not sacrificed by Agamemnon, what effect will this have on the mythological canon?

With Agamemnon cast as the poet attempting to exercise a creative choice, Menelaus conversely represents the tradition that circumscribes him. Like two sides of a coin, Menelaus and Agamemnon function as an antagonistic but interdependent unit in this play.[87]

219–22, Gibert (2005) 237, 244–5 n. 49, Michelakis (2006) 57. A Homeric precedent may also be evoked here. In *Iliad* 2 Agamemnon tests the army by suggesting they abandon their attempt to take Troy and sail home.

[87] Griffin (1990) 141 notes how the opposition of Agamemnon and Menelaus rewrites the 'monolithic unity of "the Atreidae"'. Their separate identities in the *IA*,

This could well be read as a metaphor for the challenges of tragic *mythopoiēsis*. Of course Agamemnon does choose to sacrifice Iphigenia, and at moments when the sacrifice seems inevitable to him, he dons the Aeschylean 'yoke of necessity' (*IA* 443, 511, cf. *Ag.* 218) and claims, as did Agamemnon in Aeschylus, that it is both terrible for him to endure the sacrifice and terrible not to (*IA* 1257–8, cf. *Ag.* 206–7). The allusions to Aeschylus serve to thematize the challenges Agamemnon faces in attempting to rewrite poetic tradition. The choice Agamemnon has before him is the choice of the tragic poet. Euripides had, several years earlier, presented his audience with a chaste and virtuous Helen who never went to Troy with Paris but was the victim of a divine plan in which the gods sent a phantom Helen to Troy (in his *Helen*). Indeed Agamemnon in the *IA* seems to allude to this when he questions the *mythos* of the Judgment of Paris (*IA* 72), which precipitated Helen's elopement with Paris. Agamemnon, like the tragic poet, *seems* to have control over the course of events but is constantly constrained by the limits of mythology.

Celia Luschnig observed some years ago that Iphigenia in this play attempts to take control of her fate, establishing a choice for herself where there seems to be none.[88] She cannot escape sacrifice, but she will no longer be the unwilling and pathetic sacrificial victim described in Aeschylus (*Ag.* 228–47) or in Euripides' own *IT* (361–77). She imagines that her death will bring great glory to Greece and to herself (*IA* 1397–9), but again poetic tradition is evoked to demonstrate that Iphigenia's efforts at control are futile.[89] She conceives of herself as 'the city-sacker (*heleptolin*) of Troy and the Phrygians' (*IA* 1475–6=1511–12), but the epithet *heleptolis* 'city-sacker' is a unique Aeschylean coinage which occurs only here and at *Agamemnon* 688 where it is famously used to suggest that *Hele*-n is appropriately named as *hele-ptolis* (among other unflattering adjectives).[90] It is

however, belie the fact that they are mythologically predisposed to function as an interdependent unit. In the *IA*'s catalogue of ships this interdependence is emphasized by the fact that they are joint commanders of their fleet (*IA* 265–9), whereas all other naval units have a single commander.

[88] Luschnig (1988) 126.

[89] Rabinowitz (1993) 47 shows that Iphigenia's freedom to choose is essentially illusory, *pace* Luschnig (1988) 126, who suggests that Iphigenia becomes the 'director of the action'.

[90] The parallel is also noted by Luschnig (1988) 127 and Gibert (1995) 252.

not Iphigenia who will be remembered positively as the 'city-sacker', rather Helen will be *blamed* with that very epithet and the entire expedition's claim to glory will be brought into question by the impious behaviour of the Greeks at Troy. In fact Iphigenia seems blithely unaware of Helen's role in Greek mythology. When she says that one man's life is worth more than that of countless women (*IA* 1394), she inverts the mythological paradigm of the Trojan War where countless men died for the sake of one woman, Helen. Iphigenia further expresses a whole string of desires which are mythologically impossible: that her mother should not mourn for her (*IA* 1437–8), that her sisters should not wear mourning (*IA* 1448), that Clytemnestra should rear Orestes to manhood (*IA* 1450), and not hate Agamemnon (*IA* 1454). All of these unattainable wishes further demonstrate Iphigenia's failure to comprehend the mythological constraints by which she is bound.

This desire for mythological impossibilities forms part of the pathos of Iphigenia's desperate situation. In her original appeal to her father, when she hoped to avoid sacrifice, Iphigenia had again expressed an unattainable wish—for the skill of Orpheus to move rocks with her song (*IA* 1211–15). Christina Sorum commented that Iphigenia's 'wish to have the song of Orpheus is appropriate not only because his song overcame death but also because he was the creator as well as the subject of poetry. To avoid her doom she must rewrite the song and her role.' Her wish, however, is 'stifled by the story of the house of Atreus', i.e. by tradition.[91] But how effective would the speech (*logos*, *IA* 1211) of Orpheus be in a drama whose plot has been propelled by a *text*? A passage from Euripides' *Alcestis* illuminates the relationship between voice and text associated with the figure of Orpheus. When the chorus sing of the Thracian tablets 'which the Orphean voice (*gērus*) inscribed' (*Alc.* 967–9), it is striking that the metaphor of *text as voice* (seen elsewhere) is reversed in its agency. In *Hippolytus*, Phaedra's letter (*deltos*) is a metaphorical song. So too in *Erechtheus* (fr. 369.6–7) the chorus wish to 'unfold the voice (*gērus*) of texts (*deltoi*)'. In the context of Orpheus, however, it is the *voice that becomes text*. Parker suggests that the expression might be connected to a tradition (attested in fifth-century vase painting) in which Orpheus' head

[91] Sorum (1992) 539 and 541, respectively.

continued to sing after he had been decapitated and where his utterances were recorded by a scribe.[92] This may well be the case, but it is tempting also to read the image in light of the shifting connection between writing and poetry from the archaic to the classical period.

Orpheus represents the archaic poet whose art is created through a combination of memory, improvisation, and the inspiration of the Muses. He is not represented in sources as composing written poetry, rather his followers record his teachings so that they can be studied.[93] It makes sense then for his voice or word (*logos*) to become text. Tragedians belong to a different category of poets, not *aoidoi* 'singers' but *poiētai* 'makers', whose craft was written down with text becoming voice in performance. The chorus in *Trojan Women* may invoke the Muse to sing of Troy (511–14), but the request is specifically for *new songs* (*kainoi hymnoi*), which are cast as a response to Homer as we shall see in the next chapter. In this case, the Muse is appropriated by tragedy for the purpose of 'making' *new* poetry.[94]

The Muse therefore becomes inextricably associated with the tragedian's novel creation as *poiētēs*, and it seems significant that Euripides is the only fifth-century tragedian to use the term *poiētēs*. A well-known fragment from his *Stheneboea*, a play which is tantalizingly relevant to a discussion of writing and *mythopoēsis* but frustratingly sparse in its evidence, reads 'Love teaches a poet (*poiētēs*), even if he has no previous knowledge of the Muses' (fr. 663: ποιητὴν δ' ἄρα | Ἔρως διδάσκει, κἂν ἄμουσος ᾖ τὸ πρίν).[95]

[92] L. Parker (2007) *ad Alc.* 966–9.

[93] On the authority of Orpheus' poetic voice as an *aoidos*, see Calame (2010). Alcid. *Od.* features a rhetorical exercise aimed at discrediting Palamedes, and attributes the invention of writing to Orpheus. Scodel (1980) 46–7 notes that the speech lists a number of suspicious accusations against Palamedes, none of which are attested elsewhere, and that they were clearly invented in order to counteract Palamedes' known benefactions to mankind. The notion that Orpheus invented writing is at odds with all other classical evidence and must surely have been a purely rhetorical stratagem in this curious work. A similarly absurd piece of rhetoric is Odysseus' claim in this text, apparently supported by witnesses, that he saw and read an incriminating message on an arrow (!) which unfortunately cannot be produced for the court as Teucer, in the confusion of the battle, had shot it off.

[94] Aristophanes would bring to the stage a personification of Euripides' Muse in his *Frogs* (1306–8) represented by an old hag impersonating Euripides' Hypsipyle playing the castanets. See further Borthwick (1994) 26–33. Hall (2006) 174 notes that Euripides' Muse is 'focalized' from the perspective of Aeschylus.

[95] Aristophanes uses the term *poiētēs* already in his *Acharnians* of 425 BC (at 633) and 'Euripides' in *Women at the Thesmophoria* (174) discusses his early career when he was beginning 'to compose' (*poiein*). Curiously these passages are not mentioned by

The expression presupposes that under normal circumstances a *poiētēs* is connected to the Muses, but that under the extraordinary influence of *Erōs*, even one unacquainted with the Muses can become a *poiētēs*.[96] The love-struck person here could be Stheneboea,[97] but another candidate might be a duplicitous Bellerophon claiming to have fallen in love with Stheneboea in order to persuade her to elope with him so that he can effect his revenge (by pushing her off his winged horse Pegasus, and into the sea). In any case, it is clearly suggested that a previously uncreative person is now creatively constructing a new plot. Iphigenia, by contrast, is not a *poiētēs* and her wish to have the gift of Orpheus implies that her appeal is doomed to failure since this drama has prioritized a written text in the orchestration of its plot. Iphigenia claims to have insight (*IA* 1369, 1374; cf. 1409), and she may well have thematic insight in identifying the conflation of marriage and sacrifice.[98] Like the Euripidean Electra, however, she does not have mythopoetic insight, although the effect in both plays is very different. Electra's hard-heartedness is emphasized by her stubborn refusal to recognize Orestes in spite of numerous signs and tokens. Iphigenia's futile desire for competency in the realm of oral poetry, by contrast, deepens the pathos of her situation as she pleads for her life, since we know from the mythological tradition that Agamemnon will not save his daughter.

The letter featured on stage in *IA* is *not* successful in its authorial intention. The reason for this, however, is that it is superseded by the success of the *first* letter, which has already written the course of events in accordance with tradition. The issue implicitly raised here is the difficulty of composing against the grain of certain established traditions, where myths themselves are conceived of as written texts in a passage which suggestively alludes (again) to Euripides' own *Helen*, a play that, arguably more than any other tragedy, *does* subvert and reinvent traditional mythic events. As the chorus consider the future Trojan War, they contemplate its cause, 'the child of the long-necked swan', i.e. Helen, '*if indeed the tale is true* (εἰ δὴ φάτις ἔτυμος)

Ford (2002) 131–57 in his detailed discussion of the origin of the word 'poet', and the references are also missed by Harriott (1969) 94 (with n. 1).

[96] Similarly a person in love is not held by the normal standards of perjury—cf. *Catalogue of Women* fr. 124.1, Philonides fr. 7, Pl. *Symp.* 183a–b.

[97] Cf. Collard and Cropp (2008) viii. 135.

[98] Cf. Foley (1985) 68–78, Gibert (1995) 239–44.

that Leda met with a winged bird, when Zeus had altered his form, *or else these tales (mythoi) borne for mankind on the writing-tablets of the Pierian Muses are irrelevant and without purpose* (εἴτ' | ἐν δέλτοις Πιερίσιν | μῦθοι τάδ' ἐς ἀνθρώπους |ἤνεγκαν παρὰ καιρὸν ἄλλως)' (*IA* 794–800). If the child of the long-necked swan was not the cause of the Trojan War, then what is left? Perhaps a phantom Helen (as in Euripides' *Helen*). What if, however, Leda never met with a Zeus in swan form, and Helen never existed at all? Or what if Helen is not really the daughter of Zeus? Raising such questions about mythological 'facts' parallels the premiss of the *IA* itself, which asks: what if Agamemnon did not sacrifice Iphigenia and abandoned the expedition?

The concept of *mythoi* as written texts belonging to the Muses, expressed in this, one of Euripides' final plays, appropriately represents the culmination of a growing relationship between text and myth in his plays.[99] In *Hippolytus* writing and *mythoi* were interdependent but separate entities. Those who spent time among the Muses had access to the writings (*graphai*) of the *ancients* (*palaiteroi*), but there was no suggestion that the writings belonged to the Muses themselves (*Hipp.* 451–4). In the *IA* the oral inspiration traditionally associated with the Muses has become circumscribed into written tablets which are in the Muses' possession, a record which can be consulted by men. The chorus question the *mythoi* recorded in the writing-tablets of the Muses—are they true or are they irrelevant? The drama answers this by positing that previous poetic and mythical traditions are inescapable, therefore they will always be relevant. They are also 'true' in the sense that recorded *mythoi* give the illusion of truth within a fictive medium. In a drama where writing-tablets have generated the plot, we are invited to connect writing with poetic tradition, to appreciate the difficulties and challenges of composing a new drama within those constraints, and to judge Euripides' success at rewriting what has already been written.

[99] Zeitlin (1995), who discusses the *IA* in relation to 5th-cent. developments in painting, observes, in that context, that reference to the Pierian tablets of the Muses 'may also suggest that the role of the Muses, daughters of Mnemosyne, is also subject to revision in the evolving cognitive techniques of the day', comparing artistic evidence depicting the Muses in images associated with writing (193).

WRITING AND AUTHORITY IN EURIPIDES' *SUPPLIANTS*

If the issue of writing opens the *IA* and raises questions about mythopoetic authority, then Euripides' *Suppliants* can be read as its partner play in using writing to create an authoritative conclusion. In *Suppliants*, which dramatized the aftermath of the Seven Against Thebes episode, the bodies of the Argive dead are retrieved by Theseus and his army after he is persuaded to intervene on behalf of Argos. The play ends with a formal alliance between Athens and Argos, ratified by an oath which is to be inscribed on a bronze tripod (a gift of Heracles) and displayed in Delphi (*Supp.* 1196–1204). In this drama, one of whose major preoccupations is addressing the concerns of various different community groups, text and *mythos* fulfil parallel functions in being inextricably connected with *the people*. The tragedy draws attention to the impact of war on orphaned sons (who form a subsidiary chorus), bereaved mothers (who form the main chorus), bereaved wives (Evadne), bereaved fathers (Iphis), defeated leaders (Adrastus), and the allies who must intervene (Theseus, Aethra). The opening of the play sees Theseus' mother Aethra surrounded by the bereaved and defeated as suppliants hoping for the intervention of Theseus and Athens in retrieving their dead since Thebes refuses to return the bodies.

When Theseus arrives and asks why these people have come as suppliants, Aethra replies 'I know why, but the *mythos* belongs to *these people* (*τῶνδε*) from this point on' (*Supp.* 109). The people in question are the bereaved, but the expression could easily function simultaneously as a gesture of appeal to the spectators in the *audience*. It suggests that 'these people' are being made privy to a new *mythos* 'from this point on' (*οὑντεῦθεν*) in the play. We know that Aeschylus dramatized this same episode in his lost *Eleusinians* and that his Theseus had resolved matters with Thebes peacefully.[100] Euripides' presentation of a Theseus who is forced to launch an attack on the city by Theban intransigence, thus represents a radical departure from this

[100] Plu. *Thes.* 29.4–5, cf. Isoc. *Pan.* 168–71.

earlier dramatic production.[101] Some scholars have perceived a sneer at the Aeschylean treatment of the episode as unrealistic when the Euripidean Theseus says to Adrastus that he will not ask him to describe which champion met which in battle and who wounded whom, for fear of incurring laughter, since such things are impossible to perceive accurately in the thick of battle (*Supp.* 846–56).[102] In fact it seems that Aeschylus may have been *more* realistic in his treatment of this episode than Euripides, in one way at least. Fr. 53a of *Eleusinians* expresses urgency related to an already putrefying corpse.[103] In Euripides there is no mention of decay among the corpses, although their mutilation is an issue (cf. *Supp.* 44–6, 282, 812, 944–5). This is particularly noteworthy since it is highly likely that *Suppliants* was written in the aftermath of the Battle of Delium of 424/3 BC, where the Athenians were defeated by the Boeotians who refused to return their war dead for seventeen days (Thucydides 4.101.1), during which time the corpses must have putrefied.[104]

The suppression of the decay in Euripides suggests a sanitizing of Athenian experience, where the *mythos* belongs even more literally to *these people* in the audience. Through the drama, the Athenians become Panhellenic heroes rather than the defeated victims of historical reality. The consequences of Athenian experience, however, ensure identification with the Argive victims in the play. The values of democratic Athens are presented in terms which appeal to the customs of all the Greeks in this play.[105] The rule of Athens is in the hands of the people (*demos—Supp.* 406–7) just as the *mythos* invites the people to see it as their own. This is evident once again at the play's dramatic climax when Evadne commits suicide on the pyre of her husband

[101] As Morwood remarks (2007) 23: '[Euripides' Theseus] would dearly wish to play the part assigned to him by Aeschylus but he and the Athenians are compelled to fight'.

[102] e.g. Fitton (1961) 444: 'The jibe at Aeschylus' treatment of heroic combat (846 ff.) seems to show that Euripides is determined to treat the subject from a realistic contemporary angle', but see Mastronarde (1994) *ad Pho.* 751–2 who shows that it is unwise to treat that passage (similar in content to *Supp.* 846–56) as an attack on Aeschylean lack of realism, and see further Ch. 2, pp. 102–5.

[103] Cf. Sophocles, *Antigone* 410–12, where the body of Polynices starts to stink within a short time of his death.

[104] On this play's probable allusions to the Battle of Delium, see Lamari (2010) 144, Morwood (2007) 29, Toher (2001*a*), Collard (1975) 10 with n. 32.

[105] Note that Theseus' speech on equality (429–55) is followed by (after the response of the Theban Herald) his speech appealing to the customs of all the Greeks (*Supp.* 522–63).

Capaneus in an astonishing theatrical spectacle.[106] After she declares her intention to her father, he responds in terror at her impending actions, saying 'do not tell this *mythos* to so many people (ἐς πολλούς)' (*Supp.* 1066). The people implied are the internal audience of Argives, but it is striking that Euripides should draw attention to his new *mythos* and its audience at this precise moment, in a scene which is one of his boldest and most spectacularly dramatic mythological innovations.

The new *mythos* of Evadne's suicide exploits the silence of the mythic tradition on the subject of Capaneus' family connections, a lacuna which enables Euripides to invent a context in which Adrastus can eulogize one of Greek mythology's monsters without explicitly contradicting tradition. The task of eulogizing the attackers on Thebes, the 'ogres' of Greek mythology,[107] is certainly a challenge given the customary requirement not to speak ill of the dead.[108] Capaneus is arguably the toughest candidate. He had boasted in defiance of Zeus that he could sack Thebes and was blasted by Zeus' thunderbolt as a result, as the Theban Herald has reminded us (*Supp.* 496–9; cf. A. *Seven* 425–34, and E. *Pho.* 1172–86). Adrastus glosses over this issue but his designation of Capaneus as 'the one through whom the violent missile flew' (*Supp.* 860: τὸ λάβρον οὗ βέλος διέπτατο) represents a tacit acknowledgement of that tradition. More surprising, at first glance, is Adrastus' description of Capaneus as someone moderate (*Supp.* 866), a quality seemingly antithetical to the Capaneus who is known for his arrogance. He is said to be a true friend to his friends (*Supp.* 867) and not ἄκρατον 'unmixed', i.e. violent, in any way towards his household or the citizens (*Supp.* 870–1). The adjective ἄκρατον 'unmixed', normally used to refer to

[106] Rehm (1994) 112 goes so far as to claim that 'it would be hard to find a more theatrically daring moment in the history of the stage'. It is certainly 'a theatrical extravagance' (Collard (1975) 356).

[107] The expression of Storey (2009) 124.

[108] A law to this effect was apparently established by Solon; see Plu. *Sol.* 21.1 and cf. Pl. *Mx.* 234c. The problem of eulogizing criminals is encountered by the chorus in Aeschylus' *Seven Against Thebes* as they lament the deaths of the Theban princes. They cannot reasonably eulogize the fratricidal brothers, both guilty in death of monstrous kin-murder. The resulting choral ode is unsettling. Language of victory is exploited to describe disasters that have befallen the house, and the trophy of *Atē* 'Ruin' is said to stand at the gates where the brothers were killed (*Seven* 951–60). On the disturbing content of the lament see Foley (2001) 49–53 and Torrance (2007) 104–5. On the language of victory used to describe calamities, see Hutchinson (1985) *ad* 951 and 953–60. On *Atē* in Aeschylus, see Sommerstein (forthcoming *a*).

unmixed (and therefore dangerous) wine, is here applied to a person. The wine imagery evoked confirms that Capaneus' moderation is specifically related to restraint from excessive feasting. He shuns whoever loads his dining table excessively and says that virtue does not reside in gluttony (*Supp.* 864–6). That Capaneus should shun excessive feasting does not contradict the fact that he is an arrogant and aggressive warrior towards his enemies. Similarly Capaneus 'the family man' need not be in opposition to his mythological persona. In Aeschylus (*Seven* 49) all the attackers send mementoes home to their families, a fact alluded to also at *Supp.* 972–3. Capaneus' dedication to his family is validated in the dramatic self-immolation of his wife Evadne on his funeral pyre (in the presence of her father Iphis) later in the play. Euripides is thus able to exploit Capaneus' previously untapped relationship with his family in order to create a new *mythos* while conforming to established tradition.[109]

Out of the five champions praised in Adrastus' oration, in fact none is presented in entirely untraditional terms, as is evident when one compares their presentation to that of Aeschylus' *Seven Against Thebes*. Eteoclus is said to reject gold and to hate individuals who do wrong (as opposed to hating their city; *Supp.* 871–7). There is nothing here antithetical to Eteoclus' characteristics as an aggressor in Aeschylus, where his shield inscription is *not* written in gold letters as opposed to that of Capaneus (*Seven* 457–69; cf. 434). Hippomedon is praised in terms of the harsh physical training he subjects himself to and his athletic ability (*Supp.* 881–7). This description aligns him with the Aeschylean Hippomedon whose enormous strength is emblematized through the metaphor of shield as threshing floor

[109] Several scholars have exaggerated the degree to which Adrastus' eulogy differentiates the champions from their traditional roles, or have been unreasonable in suggesting that Euripides is mocking the lack of sincerity with which funeral speeches could sometimes be delivered (cf. e.g. Conacher (1956) 24, Fitton (1961) 437–40, Burian (1985) 148, Mendelsohn (2002) 187–96). In a play as politically charged as *Suppliants*, it would be bizarre for Euripides to include a funeral oration in order to mock that convention (in addition to Zuntz (1955) 3–25, 55–81, 88–94, see Burian (1985) and Michelini (1994) and (1997) on the importance of politics in *Suppliants*). In fact, the discrepancy between the Theban herald's account of Capaneus' blasphemy and Adrastus' praise can be reconciled in dramatic terms by the emphasis placed on Capaneus' personal connections, and through the characterization of the Theban herald as *παρεργάτης λόγων* 'an excessive wordsmith' who gives opinions which are beyond his station (*Supp.* 426 and cf. Collard (1972) 44 who points out that Theseus is the moral victor of the *agōn* with the Theban herald).

(*Seven* 489). Parthenopaeus is said to be young, exceptionally beautiful with many lovers, and an immigrant in Argos who cares for the city (*Supp.* 888–900). Again, there are no actual contradictions of Parthenopaeus' characteristics from Aeschylus (*Seven* 526–49). Finally Tydeus, who along with Capaneus is traditionally the most aggressive of the attackers, is described as an excellent warrior whose thoughts were more on deeds than on words (*Supp.* 901–8). Once more, we find no disjunction between this Tydeus and the Tydeus of Aeschylus who itches for war (*Seven* 375–94). In fact the Euripidean Tydeus who finds 'precise music in his shield' (*Supp.* 906 *ἀκριβῆ μουσικὴν ἐν ἀσπίδι*) seems to evoke directly the Tydeus of Aeschylus who has bronze-wrought bells on the underside of his shield which clang forth terrifyingly (*Seven* 385–6).[110]

The success of Adrastus' eulogy in his skilful manipulation of words can be linked thematically to his reflections on the requirements for successful creation of poetry. In what seems to be a discussion of empathy, Adrastus explains (*Supp.* 180–3): 'The poet (*ὑμνοποιόν*) himself must enjoy creating (*τίκτειν*) the songs (*μέλη*) he creates (*τίκτῃ*); if he does not experience (*πάσχῃ*) this and is personally distressed (*οἰκοθέν γ' ἀτώμενος*), then he is not able to bring pleasure to others (*ἄλλους*), nor is it right that he should (*οὐδὲ γὰρ δίκην ἔχει*).'[111] The crux of the issue raised here is the complex tension between grief and enjoyment created by poetry whose subject matter is as emotionally charged as war and its devastating impact. The poet must possess an ability to enjoy composing but must

[110] This passage of Euripides' *Suppliants* has been found problematic by scholars. The metonymy of using 'shield' to mean 'warfare', as the passage has been understood, is unusual and some have found it unacceptable (see Morwood (2007) *ad* 902–8 and 906). Certainly there seems to be some corruption at *Supp.* 901–8 (see Collard (1975) *ad* 901–8). However, read in light of A. *Seven* 385–6, E. *Supp.* 906 makes good sense.

[111] The passage is preceded by reflections on how the rich and the poor should be aware of each other, and how the fortunate should consider the pitiable (*Supp.* 176–9); the empathy implied in these statements and that suggested by the requirements of the good poet seem thematically unified. Collard (1975) *ad* 176–83 would prefer a stronger link between the passages and posits a lacuna before *Supp.* 180 in which Adrastus' eloquence is mentioned and linked to his reputation as 'honey-voiced' (Tyrt. 9.8 (=West 12.8), Pl. *Phdr.* 269a). The term is used of song inspired by the Muses (Pi. *N.* 3.4, *I.* 2.3, *h. Ap.* 519), of the nightingale (*h. Pan.* 18), of the Sirens (*Od.* 12.187), and of the poet (Pi. *P.* 3.64, *O.* 11.4). If Euripides alludes to Adrastus' gift for song in the lacuna, as Collard suggests, Adrastus' comment on the art of successful poetic composition (as a poet himself) invites the audience to consider Euripides' own composition in a literary-critical manner.

simultaneously be able to maintain a personal distance from the grief of the circumstances he creates. Using the metaphor of 'giving birth' to poetry (*τίκτειν*, *τίκτῃ*), and expressing the notion that the poet 'experiences' or 'suffers' this (both suggested by the term *πάσχῃ*), implies that composing poetry can be a painful process. The challenge is for the poet to engage with his characters (in order to engage the audience) but not to become overwhelmed by his own personal experience.[112]

The drama itself directly engages and questions the concept of war and poetry as diametrically opposed forces. The unpleasant Theban Herald claims that peace is most beloved by the Muses (*Μούσαισι προσφιλεστάτη*, *Supp.* 489). Adrastus says that Hippomedon 'endured (*ἐτόλμησ'*) not turning his attention towards the pleasures of the Muses' (*οὐ πρὸς ἡδονὰς | Μουσῶν τραπέσθαι*, *Supp.* 882–3) in order to focus on a life of harsh physical training. These passages suggest an opposition between war and poetry, but the implication is completely undermined by the drama as a whole. In Adrastus' final eulogy, Tydeus had been described as finding precise *mousikē* 'music' in his shield (*Supp.* 906). The image suggests that war is an appropriate place from which to develop the arts of the Muses, and that war is an appropriate subject for poetry. The message is confirmed by the drama itself, which creates a new war between Thebes and Athens where Aeschylus had presented a peaceful diplomatic negotiation. In fact, it is abundantly clear from the Greek literary canon that war and its aftermath were considered powerful sources of poetry. Hippomedon's choice to focus exclusively on harsh physical training is an endurance (cf. *ἐτόλμησ'*) and he exhibits a lack of moderation in his attitude which is normally punished in Greek myth.[113]

[112] Wright (2010) 168 discusses this passage as an example of 'method composition', 'as analogous to method acting', which implies that a good poet 'should enter into the feelings of his characters' and shows how the concept is parodied by Aristophanes (*Thesm.* 148–72).

[113] Compare Hippolytus in Euripides' *Hipp.*, who also focuses exclusively on hunting while rejecting sexuality (rather than poetic or artistic pursuits) and is savagely punished. For explicit praise of moderation in Euripides cf. *Hipp.* 265, *Ion* 632, and *Med.* 125–7 with Mastronarde (2002) *ad loc*. Theseus in *Suppliants* shows moderation by refraining from sacking Thebes after retrieving the bodies (723–5).

In Euripides' later *Antiope*, which pits a music-loving brother Amphion against his land-working twin Zethus, Zethus appears to get the upper hand but Amphion's musical skill is later promoted and validated by Hermes, the inventor of the lyre, and by Zeus (fr. 223.84–91 Kannicht = fr. 223.90–97 Collard (2004*b*)). Hermes predicts

Adrastus' reflection on the connection between grief, enjoyment, and audience response to poetry anticipates Aristotle's theory of *katharsis* achieved through the emotions of pity and fear, as well as Aristotelian theories of persuasive representation.[114] The concern with audience response, the importance that *others* (*allous*) enjoy the composition, can be directly linked to the drama's insistence that poetic *mythoi* belong to the people and to the audience. But if the new *mythoi* in this drama belong to the people's experience, then so too does the value of writing. In a famous speech where Theseus extols the virtues of democracy and its egalitarian qualities, he draws attention to the importance of written laws which can be consulted by all. Athens, explains Theseus, is not ruled by one man but is free, and is ruled in rotation by its people who have an equal share in power, whether rich or poor (*Supp.* 404–8). 'When laws are written down both the weak man and the rich man have equal rights' (*Supp.* 433–4: γεγραμμένων δὲ τῶν νόμων ὅ τ' ἀσθενὴς | ὁ πλούσιός τε τὴν δίκην ἴσην ἔχει). Such praise for the virtues of writing and openness anticipate the drama's conclusion where the alliance between Athens (Theseus) and Argos (Adrastus) is ratified by an oath inscription.

There are examples of inscriptions recording sworn alliances from the historical record,[115] but this is the only reference to an inscribed oath in Greek tragedy. Athens and Argos had made an alliance, of course, at the end of Aeschylus' *Oresteia* (*Eum.* 762–74). In both instances the leaders (Adrastus in Euripides, Orestes in Aeschylus) swear on behalf of their people not to make war on their new allies, but in Aeschylus the vow is oral only. When Athena commands the written record of the oath in *Suppliants*, Euripides may be suggesting a rewriting of the Aeschylean alliance. There, Athena is present to witness Orestes' oath but this has none of the formal sanctifying

that Amphion's music will have the power to move stones and trees, facilitating the work of labourers. Both pursuits are validated (cf. Wilson (2000*a*) 448) and, indeed, their interdependence is personified by the chorus, whose function is to sing and dance but whose fictional identity is that of Attic farmers.

[114] *Poetics* 1449^{b} and 1455^{a}30; cf. Wright (2010) 168 and Collard (1975) *ad* 181b-3a.

[115] The regulations (involving an oath) imposed by the Athenians on Erythrae (mid-460s or 453/2), for example, were written down (*IG* I^{3} 14). Recording an oath was clearly also something which could be imagined as taking place in the distant past. Plato tells us that the oath of office sworn by the ten kings of Atlantis was inscribed on a column in the sanctuary of Poseidon (*Critias* 119–20).

features one might expect from such an alliance.[116] In particular, no sacrifices are made, whereas Theseus in Euripides is to sacrifice three sheep (E. *Supp.* 1201).[117] The inscribing of the oath adds an extra layer of formality to the alliance. In addition, the vessel on which it is inscribed, the tripod of Heracles, and the place in which it is to be kept, the temple of Apollo at Delphi, invest this oath-record not only with Panhellenic appeal but also with significant ritual and civic authority.[118] Authority and successful plot resolution both seem to be emphasized by the inscribing of the tripod. Of course, the tripod is an appropriate symbol of a heroic alliance as a traditional gift between host and guest under the Greek ritual of *xenia*.[119] The tripod, however, was an important symbol for success in the context of the Dionysia festival where the victorious dithyrambic chorus was awarded a tripod as a prize.[120] An allusion to the closing ceremonies of the Dionysia might easily have suggested itself after the poignancy of the boys' lament at *Supp.* 1123–64 while holding their father's ashes, which must have evoked the procession of actual Athenian war orphans before the play's performance.[121] The memorializing function of the inscribed tripod as a record of the original performative action of swearing an oath is thus an emblematic reflection of the dramatic creation itself, a performance for which writing provides longevity beyond the original event.[122]

This drama, like the other tragedies discussed, uses the term *mythos* and the motif of writing to suggest that Euripides is rewriting

[116] On political implications of the alliance in Aeschylus see Podlecki (1999) 82–4.

[117] The sacrificing of sheep is important also for ratifying the sworn truce in the *Iliad* (3.245–301).

[118] Cf. D. Steiner (1994) 66. Seaford (2009) 224 argues that it is likely 'that Euripides believes in their reality [i.e. the tripod and inscription]' against Scullion (2000) 220 who sees the tripod and inscription as poetic inventions. My own position is somewhere in between, see Ch. 1, p. 38. Here the tripod must be *both* realistic *and* poetically inventive to achieve full success as a dramatic and poetic device.

[119] See Finley (1978) 61–6.

[120] Wilson (2000*b*) 147, 199–205 discusses the awarding of tripods and their memorializing function.

[121] See Morwood (2007) *ad* 1123–64, Rehm (1988) 290 n. 103.

[122] For the connection between poetry, writing, and memorialization in Euripides, compare *Trojan Women* 1188–91 where Hecuba wonders what a poet (*mousopoios*) could write on Astyanax' tomb other than that he was killed by the fearful Argives, a shameful epigram for Greece (discussed further in Ch. 4, p. 243). Wright (2010) 169–71 discusses several passages in Euripides which dwell on the enduring nature of poetry. On memorializing khoregic victory in Athens through monuments and inscriptions see Wilson (2000*b*) 214–62.

older models and producing something new within the constraints of mythical tradition. Where this play differs from the rest, however, is in its association of writing, indeed 'rewriting' in terms of a poetic Athenian–Argive alliance, with public and religious authority and prestige. The openly accessible tripod in the tragedy's aetiological conclusion implies the same kind of egalitarian accessibility claimed by Theseus for written laws.[123] In the context of a twenty-first century, first-world, hyper-literate culture, the connection made by Theseus between written laws and equality make sense, but how appropriate is it to think of fifth-century Athens as a community of equals, all with equal access to these written texts? Scholars of Greek literacy have generally maintained that classical Athens had numerous members in its community who had only a very basic standard of literacy or were completely illiterate.[124] In the context of written laws, Rosalind Thomas has observed that the process of inscription imbued Athenian laws with authority, but also that the use of inscriptions in fifth-century Athens could tend towards being authoritarian.[125] Nevertheless, Gagarin's recent study of writing and Greek law suggests that literacy was more widespread than conservative estimates allow,[126] and Missiou's new findings corroborate this.[127] Moreover, there are literate (if unsophisticated) low-class characters in Aristophanes, as Niall Slater has discussed.[128] In the final section of this chapter I discuss some passages of performed literacy on the Athenian stage and argue that Euripides' audience were probably all literate enough to feel that they, at least, were 'equal' in Theseus' terms.

[123] Cf. E. *Hec.* 866 where the claim that written laws ensure equality may be implicitly echoed (see Collard (1991) *ad loc.*), although C. Segal (1993) 199–200 suggests that Hecuba is pitting written human laws (*nomoi*), which circumscribe freedom, against the unwritten universal value system (*nomos*) which safeguards ritual supplication and guest-friendship.

[124] On the low levels of literacy in ancient Greece, see W. Harris (1989) esp. 65–115 and Thomas (1992) 8–11 and *passim*. Wealthier Athenians were far more likely to be literate than poor ones, cf. Harris (1989) 103.

[125] Thomas (1992) 65–73, 144–7 and Thomas (1994). D. Steiner (1994) 232 reads *Supp* 349–55 in these terms: 'Far from guaranteeing full democracy, the existence of written law merely gives the impression of popular rule while supporting a traditional monarch'.

[126] Gagarin (2008) esp. 176–80.

[127] Missiou (2011).

[128] Slater (1996) 101, 104.

READING, WRITING, AND DRAMATIC PERFORMANCE

What is extraordinary about Athenian tragedy is that, in contrast to the society which produced it, it gives voice to the lower classes, women, slaves, and foreigners, those members of society excluded from the mainstream of Athenian citizenry, all while paradoxically reaffirming the traditional social parameters of Athenian society.[129] The issue of illiteracy in the lower classes is well illustrated by a fragment from Euripides' lost *Theseus*. The play seems to have dramatized Theseus' visit to Crete during which he slew the minotaur with Ariadne's help.[130] It features a speech (fr. 382) by a herdsman who confesses that he is illiterate (*ἐγὼ πέφυκα γραμμάτων μὲν οὐκ ἴδρις*) and goes on to describe the shapes that make up the name *ΘΗΣΕΥΣ* 'THESEUS'. These are: *Θ*—a circle (*kuklos*) as measured by a compass with a conspicuous mark in its centre; *H*—a pair of lines (*grammai*) with another holding them at a distance in the middle; *Σ*—a mark resembling a curled lock of hair (*βόστρυχός τις ὣς εἰλιγμένος*); *E*—one upright line with three attached to it crosswise; *Υ*—two lines (*grammai*) that begin from separate points and run together to a single base (*εἰς μίαν βάσιν*); the last is like the third. The difficulty of describing the *Υ* is remarked upon (fr. 382.10) and the whole process, which takes eleven lines, is underlined as cumbersome and long-winded. It is unclear *where* the name was inscribed. Webster suggested Theseus' ship (unduly influenced by *IT* 260), after considering a sword, but Niall Slater has shown that both are unlikely in terms of mythological and historical context.[131] Clearly the addressee, probably King Minos, is expected to decipher the riddle and recognize the letters described.[132] The image of the lock of hair,

[129] Cf. Hall (1997) 93 and *passim*.

[130] See further Jouan and Van Looy (2000) 145–65, Kannicht (2004) 426–36, Collard and Cropp (2008) vii. 415–27.

[131] Webster (1967) 106–7 and Slater (2002*b*) 119–22.

[132] If the addressee is not Minos, then it is at least 'someone in power' (Slater (2002*b*) 122). Sutton (1978) argues that this play was a satyr-drama and that the herdsman was Silenus. It is difficult, however, to see why Athenaeus would not have designated Silenus by name rather than attributing the fragment to a herdsman if this were the case. Jouan and Van Looy (2000), Kannicht (2004), Collard and Cropp (2008) all treat the play as a tragedy.

elsewhere a token of recognition in tragedy (famously in Aeschylus' *Libation Bearers*) and here repeated twice, emphasizes the importance of recognizing the true meaning of what it represents.[133] The passage as a whole confirms the significant divide between the literate and the illiterate, where the illiterate herdsman is unable to recognize 'new' recognition signs in the form of letters. It is only the literate character who can solve the riddle, and Renaud Gagné notes the metatheatrical potential of a character being unable to recognize the title of the play in which he is performing.[134]

It is striking that two tragedians imitated the passage—Euripides' younger contemporary Agathon, and the fourth-century tragedian Theodectas (preserved in Book 10 of Athenaeus' *Deipnosophistae* (454b–d)). In the only fragment surviving from Agathon's lost *Telephus* (we cannot tell whether he was inspired by Euripides' *Telephus*), an unidentified illiterate character describes the letters of the very same name. It is clear that Agathon sought to improve on Euripidean expression. Agathon's character takes just six lines to describe the word, one line per letter, and where Euripides used geometric shapes and a lock of hair to describe the letters, Agathon uses easily identifiable material objects from the Greek world. *Θ* is a circle with a navel at its centre (*mesomphalos kuklos*). *H* is two straight rods (*kanones*) yoked together. *Σ* is like a Scythian bow. *E* is a trident lying sideways. *Υ* is two [rods] yoked to one rod (*kanōn*). The last *Σ* is, of course, the same as the third letter. Alexandra Pappas has discussed how these images hint at Theseus' own experiences. The exploits of Theseus were depicted on the Athenian Treasury at Delphi, also the location of the *omphalos* 'navel' stone. Alternatively the *mesomphalos kuklos* may refer to the kind of shield used by Theseus with a knob at its centre. The Scythian bow recalls Theseus' battles against Amazons. The trident reminds us of Theseus' father Poseidon.[135] Where Euripides uses the term

[133] Gagné (forthcoming) also suggests a possible connection between the lock of hair and the shaved locks of ephebes associated with Theseus in the Athenian imagination.

[134] Gagné (forthcoming).

[135] The paper entitled 'Political Crimes? Verbal and Visual Literacy on the Classical Athenian Stage' was delivered as the keynote speech at the Classics Graduate Forum of the University of Wisconsin-Madison on 2 May 2008. I am most grateful to Dr Pappas for sending me a copy of her paper.

grammai 'lines', Agathon substitutes *kanones* 'rods'.[136] The entire texture of the description in Agathon therefore shifts from being one of textual lines to becoming one of *images* from artistic materiality *used as text*.

By suggesting that letters are images of commonly recognizable objects, Agathon attempts to efface this distance through an appeal to visual literacy, as Pappas argues. The technical knowledge of Agathon's character has prompted Niall Slater to suggest that he might be a high-status character *pretending to be illiterate*, possibly the disguised Telephus.[137] Certainly the character is more sophisticated that the herdsman in Euripides, but the problem of illiteracy remains clear. Recognizing the Delphic navel stone or the trident does not mean that they translate into 'TH' and 'E' sounds for the viewer if the viewer is illiterate. The riddling connections between the objects themselves and the persona of Theseus do not seem strong enough to guarantee an identification of Theseus. The bow, for example, is most commonly associated with Heracles in tragedy. Agathon's adaptation, then, may imply a broader 'reading' public but this remains an illusion. The fact that Theodectas (fr. 6) combines elements from both Euripides' and Agathon's descriptions roughly equally with very minor innovations confirms that both earlier poets presented a clear divide between literate and illiterate. *Θ* is a 'soft-eyed' circle (*malakophthalmos kuklos*; cf. Agathon). *H* is two rods (*kanones*; cf. Agathon) of equal length connected by a horizontal line. *Σ* is a twisted lock of hair (*ἑλικτῷ βοστρύχῳ*; cf. Euripides). *E* is a trident on its side (cf. Agathon). *Υ* is two strokes of equal length leading to a single base (*εἰς βάσιν μίαν*; cf. Euripides); the last *Σ* is as the previous lock of hair (cf. Euripides).

The fact that the Euripidean passage inspired such imitation is clearly a testament to its popularity among the audience as a motif. Surely the majority (if not all) of the audience members are to be imagined as being able to 'read' the description of the letters, hence its appreciation and subsequent imitation.[138] Other fifth-century dramas imply enough alphabetic literacy among the audience for them to 'read' combinations of letters. In Sophocles' satyr-drama *Amphiaraus* a character danced out the shapes of letters

[136] Noted by Pappas and by Slater (2002*b*) 123.
[137] Slater (2002*b*) 123–4, emphasis added.
[138] Cf. Slater (2002*b*) 118.

of the alphabet (fr. 121). Armand D'Angour has argued that the chorus of Aristophanes' *Babylonians* (produced in 426) had masks depicting the letters of the alphabet,[139] which suggests that chorus members could have been arranged in groups spelling out short words. Certainly in Callias' comedy *The Letters Tragedy* the chorus members represented the twenty-four letters of the alphabet in a physical form, singing and dancing out letter combinations.[140] In his discussion of Callias' comedy, Renaud Gagné comments that writing was 'the very technology through which drama itself was composed', which had become the 'dominant, most prestigious mode of communication of the polis', so that it 'presented the late classical playwright with a tool for metapoetic explorations and experimentations'.[141] The connection between writing and prestige suggested by Gagné corroborates our sense of the connection between a Greek playwright's metapoetic appeal to writing and the desirability of literary sophistication in his audience. When the chorus of Euripides' *Erechtheus* mention reading as one of the activities they hope to pursue in old age (fr. 369), such elderly gentlemen of leisure may well have been imagined as members of the circle of literati at Athens, just as the dramatists themselves were part of a section of society with access to the education and means for writing and producing drama.[142]

[139] D'Angour (1999) 112–14.

[140] Athenaeus' discussion of Callias' *The Letters Tragedy* (453c–d) gives confusing information regarding its context which makes it difficult to date. Rosen (1999) argues that it was influenced by tragic engagement with literacy on the Attic stage and that the issue was probably also topically related to public debate over Athenian adoption of the Ionic alphabet, which was made official in 403 BC, on which see Pöhlmann (1971). Ruijgh (2001) dates the play to *c.*435 based on Athenaeus' claim that it influenced Euripides' *Medea*, and argues (274) that Euripides imitated Callias in his *Theseus* by exploiting the Ionic alphabet when the herdsman describes an H (rather than an E) as the second letter in Theseus' name. Gagné (forthcoming) agrees with Rosen (1999) and others who posit a late 5th-cent. date. Certainly an interest in letters and the alphabet seems to have persisted in later Greek drama. Adespota fr. 53 *PCG* (3rd cent. BC) contains the beginning of an alphabet-acrostic, on which see Collard (2009) 11–12.

[141] Gagné (forthcoming).

[142] Compare also the presentation of the music-loving Amphion as representative of the Athenian élite in Euripides' *Antiope* (discussed by Wilson (2000*a*) 443–6). For the image of an old man reading in tragedy, cf. Aeschylus fr. 358 which gives the example of an old man reading clearly as an analogue for keeping the enemy at arm's length. See also Ford (2003) 31 on the old men as representative of 'civilized leisure'.

Mark Griffith has argued that, in terms of its thematic concerns and resolutions, Greek tragedy is continually 'affirming traditional elite values and practices'.[143] Moreover, several scholars have demonstrated how the logistics of the fifth-century theatre were dependent on the wealthy Athenian citizenry for their success. Peter Wilson has discussed how tragedy, of all the performances at the Dionysia, is most associated with costly production, both symbolically through its lavish costumes and sets and 'at the level of material instantiation by a practice of intensive expenditure on the fabric of tragedy by the super-élite of wealth in Athens'. He has also observed how the representation in oratory of the *choregos* (sponsor) as 'democratic' by virtue of his expenditure is deeply problematic since '[t]he rhetoric which aims to bring the élite speaker nearer to the demos and its sympathies in so doing points to the ineradicable economic and social gulfs between them'.[144] The Theatre of Dionysus in the fifth century charged an admission fee of two obols per head and probably per day, which represented a third of the daily pay for an oarsman or builder and two-thirds of a juror's.[145] This meant that theatre attendance in the official audience space was only available to those who could afford it.[146] Recent studies suggest that the capacity of

[143] Griffith (1995) 111, referring to the *Oresteia*, but see also Griffith (1998) on the aristocratic concerns of Greek tragedy more generally.

[144] Wilson (2000*b*) 94 and 174, respectively. Wilson (2008) shows how claims in ancient sources that the Athenians spent more on the Dionysia than on their military may well have been justified. The Aristophanic parody of Euripides dressing his characters in rags (e.g. *Ach.* 410–13, *Peace* 146–8, *Frogs* 842, 846, 1063–4) is clearly a comic exaggeration and is unrepresentative of the fact that those characters in rags are often juxtaposed with characters dressed in extreme luxury (e.g. Electra and Clytemnestra in *Electra*; in *Helen* Menelaus has two costumes, the first is one of rags, the second is one of full armour, and Helen changes her costume to one of mourning complete with a change of hairstyle from long to cropped).

[145] Sommerstein (2010) 123. Csapo (2007) 97 also notes that the fee was 'something more than a nominal sum'. Slater (2002*a*) 185–7 discusses how the two-obol fee charged by Charon in *Frogs* helps to cast the Underworld as a metatheatrical representation of the Theatre of Dionysus.

[146] Since the festival lasted four days, and the male head of the household would bring his sons or an elderly father, the cost for a family attending the entire festival would have been significant. In spite of claims in some sources (e.g. Plutarch's *Life of Pericles* 9.3) that Pericles introduced the theoric fund (in the 5th cent.) to subsidize the cost of theatre attendance, scholars generally agree that it was not introduced until the second half of the 4th cent. See Ruschenbusch (1979), Csapo (2007) 103, 114, Sommerstein (2010) 123, 128, 141. Roselli (2011) 87–117 suggests that theatre attendance in the 5th cent. was supported by 'ad hoc payments approved by the Assembly' (92), but Sommerstein (2012*b*) questions whether this actually occurred.

the Theatre of Dionysus in the fifth century was actually between 3,700 and 7,000, a far more select audience than the traditional and influential estimate of 14,000–17,000 (a figure based on the fourth-century Lycurgan theatre).[147] Of course, not all fifth-century theatregoers will have been super-rich, and David Roselli's new book demonstrates that the audiences at the Theatre of Dionysus were in all likelihood quite heterogeneous.[148] He has also suggested that poorer spectators might have attended performances for free in unofficial spaces, such as on the hillside surrounding the theatre.[149] Moreover, Missiou demonstrates that functional literacy was a requirement in many areas of administration in Athens, and that the Athenian councillors (*bouleutai*), 'who regularly dealt with written material belonged to all social classes'.[150] Missiou's findings imply that the description of the letters making up Theseus' name in Euripides' lost tragedy may well have been understood by the entire audience. Certainly the prominence and repeated use of the motif of writing in Euripidean drama shows that representations of literacy were enjoyed by the audience at large. Nevertheless, the sophisticated association between writing and *mythopoiēsis* in Euripides dovetails with his complex intertextual allusions to earlier poetry (traced throughout this study), suggesting that there was also a section of the audience who had read written versions of the tragedies Euripides was rewriting.

The most likely candidates for such a reading public remain the members of the aristocracy, poets like Cratinus, Aristophanes, and Sophocles, and those who were involved in the financing and production of the tragic festivals. The poor may have been able to view a dramatic performance from unofficial spaces, but the most important front row seats, the *prohedria*, were reserved for the élite,[151] and a significant number of the spectators within the official audience

[147] See Dawson (1997), Korres (2002) 540, Goette (2007) and cf. Csapo (2007) 97–100 who notes (98) that '[t]he reduced estimates are in line with archaeological evidence unavailable to the scholars, like Pickard-Cambridge (1946) and Dinsmoor (1951), who have shaped our traditional view of the architectural history of the theatre of Dionysus.' I am most grateful to Ewen Bowie for referring me to Goette (2007).

[148] Roselli (2011).

[149] Roselli (2011) 63, 72–5, 196.

[150] Missiou (2011) *passim*, esp. 109–42, quotation from 147.

[151] Roselli (2011) notes that these honorary seats were provided by the state free of charge (66), and that these were granted to civic magistrates and officials, public benefactors and distinguished individuals (78), so that some of the wealthiest in Athens did not have to pay for their seats.

space will have had a certain social standing and a certain degree of education.[152] Even Roselli concedes that 'the percentage of relatively wealthy spectators in the audience was higher than the number of wealthy people in society at large'.[153] Martin Revermann has shown that a considerable number of Athenian theatregoers would have had personal experience of performing at the Dionysia, thus ensuring a sophisticated level of 'theatrical competency' among many audience members. Revermann also observes a hierarchy of genre where tragedy and tragic chorality maintained a special appeal to the aristocratic upper classes.[154] The sophistication with which Euripides invites his audience to consider the process of dramatic composition as a mythopoetic craft combining writing, oral performance, and theatrical spectacle, confirms evidence of the conditions of tragic production in suggesting that he is writing, in part, at least, for an educated and theatrically sophisticated audience.

MISE EN ABÎME? CONCLUDING REMARKS

One of the most obvious ways in which an author can make an audience or a reader consider the act of composition is by inserting a 'work within the work' as a *mise en abîme*. Edith Hall has observed that, although explicit *mises en abîme* are confined to comedy, tragedy regularly draws attention to its status as an artistic medium through metaphors designed to reflect (in general terms) on 'the process by which tragedy turns horror and somatic suffering into art', and (more specifically) on the painted masks of its characters.[155] This particular analogy is, as Hall remarks, specifically theatrical rather than more generally dramatic since the latter 'would include the possibility of reading the text rather than witnessing it in performance'.[156] The

[152] Cf. Sommerstein (2010) 124.
[153] Roselli (2011) 197.
[154] Revermann (2006*b*) esp. 107–15 with discussion of tragedy as upper class at 111.
[155] Hall (2006) 99–141, quotation from 125. On metatheatricality in Aristophanes, see especially Slater (2002*a*).
[156] Hall (2006) 118. Dobrov (2001) 15 uses a looser definition of *mise en abîme* in the context of tragedy (and comedy) to 'denote a metarepresentational strategy whereby a miniature theatrical *situation* is embedded within a larger, similarly structured dramatic framework' (Dobrov's italics). The tragic episodes he analyses

scene where Theseus processes the text of Phaedra's letter in *Hippolytus* comes closest to a tragic *mise en abîme* of this kind, but we must turn to comedy to find an explicit reference to reading a tragic text, and it is appropriate that the text should be Euripides' own *Andromeda* (which Dionysus claims to have read at *Frogs* 52–4). The issue of a reading public for fifth-century tragedy is a vexed one, but it seems clear that there *was* a reading public in late fifth-century Athens and that the bookish Euripides was one of this circle.[157] In tragedy self-referentiality remains implicit since Greek tragedy does not engage in the kind of breach of dramatic illusion present in satyr-drama and old comedy. Nevertheless, the audiences of tragedy and comedy must have overlapped significantly,[158] and it seems clear that audiences of comedy were expected to participate as spectators in the creation of dramatic and metatheatrical meaning.[159] In Chapter 5 we shall compare the metapoetic strategies of tragedy, satyr-drama, and comedy to show how all use similar literary techniques, but within the context of different genres. For the moment, we can conclude by observing that, with an audience preconditioned to think metatheatrically, it does not seem unreasonable that they would be able to think metapoetically and metatragically in response to Euripides' implicit invitations to reflect on his dramas, and on their position within mythopoetic and tragic tradition, both as newly created *mythoi* and as poetic episodes rewritten. In the next chapter we shall discuss further strategies employed by Euripides to cast his dramas as intertextual novelties.

as such are: the dynamics between Athena, Ajax, and Odysseus in *Ajax* as representative of a 'show within' (57) directed by Athena (57–69), Pentheus' cross-dressing in *Bacchae* (71, 81–4), and the plotting scene in *Helen* (126–7).

[157] See Marshall (1996) 95, Revermann (2006*a*) 14, and Introduction, p. 10.

[158] Cf. Revermann (2006*a*) 102.

[159] See Slater (2002*a*) 206 and *passim*.

4

The Trojan War

The first three chapters have made some headway in mapping Euripides' engagement with literary sources whose subject matter is the Trojan War, including events leading up to the war, and the aftermath for the returning Greek warriors. In Chapter 1 we saw how Euripides reworks and restructures Aeschylus' 'aftermath trilogy' (the *Oresteia*) while also evoking Homer, particularly in his *Electra*. This tragedy's intertextual relationship with Homer was traced further in Chapter 2 through analysis of the shield of Achilles *ekphrasis*, as was that of *Iphigenia at Aulis* in its catalogue of ships. The argument that *Iphigenia at Aulis* functions as a prequel to the *Oresteia* was developed in Chapter 3, and an analysis of all three *Palamedes* tragedies demonstrated that Euripides was writing his version of this Trojan War tragedy in metapoetic terms. There remains much to be said, however, about Euripides' Trojan War dramas and their relationship with epic and with earlier tragedies. In this chapter I discuss Euripides' *Philoctetes*, *Andromache*, *Hecuba*, the Trojan Trilogy (*Alexandros*, *Palamedes*, *Trojan Women*), and the satyr-drama *Cyclops*. I argue that Euripides positions his tragedies as rivals to previous treatments of the same mythological episode by other dramatists, but as continuations of epic paradigms transposed from Homer or from the Cyclic epics into new contexts. The *Cyclops*, by contrast, is uniquely cast as a rival version of a Homeric episode with new contemporary implications. Metapoetically loaded terms, such as *deuteros* 'second', *dissos* 'double', *kainos* 'new', are used as triggers for audience recognition of novelties or continuations in relation to earlier sources, in addition to the term *mythos*, whose importance was analysed in the last chapter.

TRAGEDY AND EPIC IN EURIPIDES' *PHILOCTETES*

At the end of Chapter 2, we discussed a fragment from Euripides' *Philoctetes* as an example of intertextual capping in relation to a fragment of Aeschylus' play of the same name. It is clear that the Aeschylean tragedy was an important model to which Euripides was responding (and we remember that the extant *Philoctetes* of Sophocles had not yet been produced), but so too were the Trojan War epics. The importance of both tragic and epic models in this play allows us to observe once again the difference in Euripides' metapoetic attitude to each genre. In his comparison of these lost plays, Dio of Prusa highlights two 'Homeric' aspects of Euripides' version, though one is more properly 'Cyclic' from the *Little Iliad*, as we shall see. A major difference between the *Philoctetes* plays of Aeschylus and Euripides, Dio tells us, is that where the former was not concerned that an undisguised Odysseus might be recognized by Philoctetes, even after a lapse of many years, the latter disguises his Odysseus through the intervention of Athena, thus copying Homer (Oration 52.5–6, 13). Dio does not have a problem with Aeschylus' undisguised Odysseus, since he feels that the severity of Philoctetes' illness and the length of time passed would make a lapse of memory on Philoctetes' part reasonable (52.6). In general, he finds Aeschylus' Odysseus to be a noble archaic hero (52.4–5, 9). Still, Dio draws a contrast between Aeschylus and Euripides in the sense that Euripides is very concerned with details and plausibility (52.11).

As an intertextual response to Aeschylus, then, the disguising of Odysseus solves a potential problem in the original. It is interesting to consider how this might have been staged. Did Odysseus have an obvious physical disguise in Euripides, or was he clearly recognizable to the audience as Odysseus, but not to Philoctetes simply through Athena's beguilement? Athena had the power to confuse those who would cause harm to her favourite Odysseus, as she does in Sophocles' *Ajax*, distorting Ajax's vision so that he does no harm to Odysseus and the other Greek military leaders (*Ajax* 42–65, 83–6). An early fourth-century Sicilian bell-krater attributed to the Dirce painter depicts a scene possibly related to Euripides' *Philoctetes*. The presence of Athena on the vase is the strongest link to the Euripidean version, and the youth she addresses may be Diomedes (who was a character in Euripides). Odysseus lurks behind the cave of Philoctetes and can be clearly identified by the type of hat (*pilos*)

characteristically associated with him. Still, there are several problems in relating the vase to Euripides' play.[1] More probably, Odysseus was disguised as a beggar, at least initially, though he might have changed his mask off-stage to coincide with the revelation of his identity.[2] This would dovetail with the repeated Aristophanic jibe about Euripides dressing his characters in rags (e.g. *Ach.* 410–13, *Peace* 146–8, *Frogs* 842, 846, 1063–4), and would have represented the direct appropriation of an epic motif. Helen relates how Odysseus disguised himself as a beggar on his reconnaissance mission into Troy (*Odyssey* 4.244–50), an issue mentioned also in the *Little Iliad* (fr. 9, West), and Athena disguises Odysseus as an aged and filthy beggar on his return to Ithaca (*Odyssey* 13. 397–403, 429–38). The novelty of a transposed context, here Lemnos rather than Ithaca, is something we have seen elsewhere in Euripides' Homeric appropriations (the presentation of the arms of Achilles at Chiron's cave, and Orestes' Odyssean scar in *Electra*, the catalogue of ships at Aulis in the *IA*). In *Philoctetes*, the transposed context would also have set Euripides apart from Sophocles who had presumably presented a similarly disguised Odysseus in his *Footwashing* (*Niptra*).[3] Dio's claim that Euripides '*imitated* Homer in this respect' (52.13: μιμησάμενος κατὰ τοῦτο Ὅμηρον), along with Dio's references to Odysseus' disguise in Homeric encounters with Eumaeus and

[1] See Taplin (2007) 98–100. The fact that Odysseus is hiding, for example, rather suggests the *Philoctetes* of Sophocles, and the youth could well be the Sophoclean Neoptolemus, though the presence of Athena is difficult to explain in this case. The scene is rare on vase-paintings. See further Collard (2004*a*) 8–9 on the few other artistic illustrations which can be loosely connected to Euripides' *Philoctetes*. C. Müller (1997) 201–10 discusses the problems of connecting classical art to the Euripidean story. He also treats possible connections between the play and an Etruscan mirror (70–96), Etruscan funerary urns (111–32), and reception of the myth in later art (133–200).

[2] See Collard (2004*a*) 6–7.

[3] The title strongly suggests that the drama was related to the famous episode of Eurycleia washing Odysseus' feet and recognizing him in *Odyssey* 19. Pearson (1917) ii. 105–10, argued, based on the fragments of Pacuvius' *Niptra*, that the play is identical to *Odysseus Wounded by the Spine* (*Akanthoplēx*) which dealt with events leading up to Odysseus' death (cf. Lloyd-Jones (2003) 236–41), but it is difficult to see how Sophocles could have collapsed two such chronologically distant events in Odysseus' life into a single plot. See Lucas de Dios (1983) 229–31 (cf. 232–5), Radt (1999) 373, Schierl (2006) 392–4, Jouanna (2007) 650, cf. Sommerstein (forthcoming *b*) n. 5. Did Euripides' *Philoctetes* post-date Sophocles' *Footwashing*? Euripides' *Philoctetes* was produced in 431 BC with *Medea* and the lost *Dictys*, and while there is no evidence for the date of *Footwashing*, it is certainly possible that it was produced in the period between Sophocles' first victory (468 BC) and 431.

Penelope (52.13), strongly suggest that he was indeed disguised as a beggar. If this was the case, then Odysseus' disguise might have evoked a bond of sympathy with Philoctetes who was also filthy and wretched in appearance, as we know from Aristophanes' *Acharnians* where the comic 'Euripides' refers to 'the beggar Philoctetes' (424) and from Dio (59.5, fr. 789d4–5).[4]

Carl Müller has argued that Athena's patronage of the unscrupulous Odysseus, who deceives Philoctetes and divests him of his powers, would have irritated the Athenian audience in 431 BC, and suggests that this may be why the trilogy (including also *Medea* and *Dictys*) was placed third (and last) in the competition.[5] This argument, however, does not take enough stock of the recognizable Homeric model, which locates Athena's actions firmly within an epic context. Moreover, there are no obvious allusions to contemporary politics in Euripides' *Philoctetes*. Explaining Philoctetes' inability to recognize Odysseus is one of a series of issues of causation and motivation addressed in Euripides' play. Why do the Greeks send one of Philoctetes' worst enemies to persuade him to come to Troy with his bow, and why does Odysseus accept the mission? Odysseus explains that Athena came to him in a dream and ordered him to perform the task, saying that she would disguise him (Dio 59.3, E. *Phil.* fr. 789b). He also debates the pros and cons of going on dangerous missions, showing that he has some serious reservations. The good fortunes of men who do not seek danger are evoked (frr. 787, 789a) and man's vanity is used to explain a desire to stand out from the rest (fr. 788). Odysseus prays to Athena to fulfil her promise of protection when he sees the wild and frightening Philoctetes approaching (Dio 59.5, fr. 789d4–5). Why have the Lemnians, who form the chorus both in Aeschylus and in Euripides, completely

[4] Olson (1991) 272 n. 15 has suggested that the emphasis placed on the costume might imply a response to (Olson says 'criticism of') an earlier dramatic treatment, and Aeschylus' *Philoctetes* is a good candidate here. The situation might also have been reminiscent of Euripides' earlier *Telephus* (of 438 BC) where Telephus was disguised as a beggar seeking the assistance of the Greeks to cure his wound, and wore a costume notoriously lampooned by Aristophanes in *Acharnians* (430–593). That Euripides' *Telephus* was particularly famous is suggested by the unannounced parodies of the play in Aristophanes' *Women at the Thesmophoria* of 411 BC, on which see Sommerstein (2001*a*) 6 n. 36.

[5] C. Müller (1997) 32–4.

neglected Philoctetes for nine years? The question, which is not raised in Aeschylus, is addressed in Euripides by the chorus members, who apologize for their neglect (Dio 52.7, E. *Phil.* fr. 789c), and Euripides also features one Lemnian in his play, Actor, who had been in regular contact with Philoctetes (Dio 52.8).

Where Euripides engages directly with the Aeschylean model by addressing these issues, Sophocles, by contrast, avoids all of these potential problems through his innovations. His Lemnos is an uninhabited island (S. *Phil.* 2) so there is no possibility for Philoctetes to interact with the locals. His Odysseus does not need a disguise because he does not confront Philoctetes until after the latter has been dispossessed of his bow. The identity of Neoptolemus, who does Odysseus' bidding, is crucial to the plan precisely because he had not been part of the original Trojan expedition (S. *Phil.* 70–4), and so is not an enemy of Philoctetes. The fortuitous survival of Sophocles' play and the fragments of the versions by Aeschylus and Euripides allow us to observe the distinctive nature of Euripides' intertextual engagement with Aeschylus, where he casts his solutions as a response to Aeschylus. The clearest parallel in extant Euripides for this metapoetic technique of underlining a potential disjunction in an Aeschylean tragedy between plot and reasonable likelihood is the *IT*, where new solutions are presented to Oresteian issues of gender relations and theology (as we have discussed). The fragmentary nature of the *Philoctetes* plays precludes us from making such connections. However, it is likely that E. *Phil.* fr. 792, which is an adapted quotation of A. *Phil.* fr. 253 (discussed on pp. 131–2), functioned as an intertextual marker in a passage that raised issues of broader and thematic intertextual significance.

Dio draws attention to Athena's disguising of Odysseus as Homeric, but so too is her method of persuasion through dreams. Odysseus states that he only agreed to go on the mission to Lemnos because of Athena's urging him through dreams (καθ' ὕπνους) 'as is her custom' (ὥσπερ εἴωθε, fr. 789b2.8–9, Dio 59.3). Mention of this 'custom' again makes a connection with Homer, since Athena's intervention through dreams is specifically an Odyssean custom.[6]

[6] C. Müller (2000) 330 does not consider the Homeric Athena's close connection with dreams when he claims that the 'dream' in Euripides is a rationalization of epic apparitions. Moreover, gods can appear in person to mortals in tragedy as easily as they can in epic, so that the distinction C. Müller implies is problematic.

At the end of *Odyssey* 4 (795–841), Athena sends to Penelope a dream-figure disguised as her sister Iphthime to ease her worries, with the dream-figure revealing that she has been sent by Athena. At the beginning of *Odyssey* 6 (13–47), Athena disguises herself as one of Nausicaa's age-mates to appear to Nausicaa in a dream. The purpose of the dream is to inspire Nausicaa to action that she would not otherwise have taken, in this case to go to wash clothes in the river the following day. As a result of the excursion, she comes upon the destitute Odysseus, who is then welcomed by the Phaeacians. The story related by Odysseus in *Philoctetes* combines elements of these two dreams. As in the first dream, Odysseus knows that Athena herself has visited him, either because she was undisguised, or because she revealed her true identity (as she does, for example, at *Odyssey* 13.287–310). The purpose of the dream, however, is more similar to that of Nausicaa since it propels Odysseus to a task he would not have undertaken otherwise.[7]

In addition to these Odyssean aspects of Euripides' *Philoctetes*, Dio mentions that the presence of Diomedes as Odysseus' companion is 'Homeric' (ὁμηρικῶς Dio 52.14), in contrast to Aeschylus' *Philoctetes*, where Odysseus arrived alone (Dio 52.14). In fact, the mission to Lemnos does not feature in Homer. It is only briefly and obliquely alluded to during the Iliadic catalogue of ships, where reference is made to Philoctetes' abandonment and to the fact that the Argives would remember him (*Iliad* 2.718–25). The *Little Iliad*, however, recorded the involvement of Diomedes in this episode (Arg. 2, West), so that his presence is certainly epic, if not specifically Homeric.[8] Did Diomedes complete the mission alone in the *Little Iliad*? Proclus' summary mentions only Diomedes. West supplements the involvement of Odysseus from Apollodorus (Arg. 2), but also cautions that 'Apollodorus has sometimes incorporated material from other sources such as tragedy'.[9] It is possible that Apollodorus

[7] In his discussion of 'dream scenes' in Homer, Morris (1983) includes supernatural visits to mortals who are in bed but cannot sleep. In the two such scenes from the *Odyssey* Athena is once again the divine being who appears, and the scenes are parallel in function to the dreams proper. Athena visits Telemachus in Sparta undisguised and urges him into action, namely to go home (15.1–47). She visits Odysseus on his return to Ithaca, in the form of a woman (20.31) but is immediately recognized as divine (20.37), and eases his worries, in this case about destroying the suitors (20.1–55).

[8] Cf. Aeschines 1.128 (*Against Timarchus*), who quotes a line from the *Iliad* which does not exist, but may have been from the *Little Iliad* (fr. 32*, West).

[9] West (2003) 13.

is importing knowledge of Euripides' *Philoctetes* by mentioning both figures. By substituting a lone Odysseus for a lone Diomedes Aeschylus may have sought to underline a non-violent persuasion of Philoctetes in his version, just as his Theseus concludes a non-violent resolution with Thebes for the Argives to bury their dead in *Eleusinians*.[10] Euripides may well have been bringing Odysseus and Diomedes together for the first time in the mission to Lemnos. Unfortunately we have scant evidence as to the role Diomedes played in Euripides' *Philoctetes*, but he must have played a part in gaining possession of Philoctetes' bow and taking him back to Troy.[11] Was there a 'theft' of Philoctetes' bow? Certainly this would correlate with the tale in the *Little Iliad* of the later joint venture of Diomedes and Odysseus in the theft of the Palladium at Troy. There Odysseus had tried to stab Diomedes in the back as they were making their escape with the Palladium, but Diomedes saw his attack and gained control of the situation (fr. 11, West).[12]

Perhaps Euripides' *Philoctetes* provided some context for this future mythological development, as he does elsewhere (e.g. the *IA* as a prequel to Aeschylus' *Agamemnon*). We have no date for Sophocles' lost *Philoctetes at Troy*, which must have dealt with Philoctetes' arrival at Troy, as the title suggests, when he is still plagued by his wound as the fragments show (frr. 697, 698). Even from our fragmentary evidence, however, it is clear that allusions to both tragic and epic sources in Euripides' *Philoctetes* reveal the same kind of metapoetic techniques we have observed separately in other Euripidean plays. Aeschylean elements are developed in a probable manner, through Odysseus' disguise, the explanation of Philoctetes' neglect at the hands of the locals, and the motivation of Odysseus to complete the mission. Epic motifs are imported and transposed into new contexts: Athena appearing in a dream to Odysseus, Odysseus disguised as a beggar in Lemnos, a joint expedition of deception and theft by Odysseus and Diomedes. Euripides also seems to have been unique in contriving the arrival of a Trojan embassy at Lemnos. Both Greeks and Trojans try to win Philoctetes to their side, since it has

[10] See Ch. 3, pp. 166–7.

[11] Olson (1991) 276, Jouan (2002) 294–5, Collard (2004*a*) 6–7, Collard and Cropp (2008) viii. 371.

[12] Cf. Davies (1989) 67. C. Müller (2000) 280 also notes possible connections to Diomedes' other exploits with Odysseus.

been prophesied that only with his bow will Troy be defeated, but Odysseus' duplicitous deceptions ensure that the Trojans leave empty-handed.[13] Dio flags the introduction of the Trojan embassy as an example of Euripides inventing an occasion for debate (52.13).[14] Dio also claims that the Odysseus of Sophocles is 'much gentler and more straightforward' (52.16: πολὺ πραιότερον καὶ ἁπλούστερον) than the Odysseus of Euripides. Since the Sophoclean Odysseus is hardly gentle or straightforward, the Euripidean Odysseus must have been particularly callous.[15] His charade about having been a close friend of Palamedes (whose ignominious death he had contrived) is especially offensive (fr. 789d26–47, Dio 52.8–10).[16] This combination of investigating the perspective of the Trojan enemy while representing ruthless Greeks is something Euripides would return to in his reworkings of the Trojan War stories, nowhere more so than in *Trojan Women*, discussed later in this chapter. As regards Euripides' *Philoctetes*, however, it is noteworthy that, in spite of the fragmentary condition of both the play itself and the Aeschylean model to which it was responding, it conforms to a typical Euripidean pattern. The combination of writing a rival version of a previous tragedy while appealing to epic authority is repeated throughout Euripides' Trojan War tragedies. This pattern is in marked contrast to Aeschylus, whose appropriations of epic material tended to set tragic patterns, and to Sophocles, who tended to combine two distinct elements from the epic cycle in a new way.[17]

[13] See Collard (2004*a*) 3–6.

[14] Jouan (2002) 293 maintains that Paris leads the embassy, and C. Müller (1997) 116 with n. 34 acknowledges that this is the scholarly *opinio communis*, though he argues against the presence of Paris (116–18, cf. 124 n. 69).

[15] Collard (2004*a*) 10.

[16] Olson (1991) 283 overlooks these issues when he claims, surprisingly, that Odysseus in Euripides' *Philoctetes* is 'a decent individual trapped in a situation not of his own making', and finds the Odysseus of Sophocles the more odious of the two. C. Müller (1997) 52–69 discusses the Palamedes myth in the context of Euripides' *Philoctetes*, and C. Müller (2000) 52–4 and 367 argues that the Louvre Hermonax Stamnos depicts a close friendship between Palamedes and Philoctetes, where Palamedes is the only Greek leader facing away from the poisonous snake at the shrine which had bitten Philoctetes, and towards his wounded comrade to whom he offers assistance.

[17] See further Sommerstein (forthcoming *b*).

DOUBLE THE DRAMA: *ANDROMACHE*

'The Muses love to create rivalry between two craftsmen who have produced a song' (*Andr.* 476–7: τεκόντοιν θ' ὕμνον ἐργάταιν δυοῖν | ἔριν Μοῦσαι φιλοῦσι κραίνειν). These lines conclude the first antistrophe of the second *stasimon* of *Andromache*. Wilamowitz's emendation of τεκόντοιν 'who have produced' for the metrically anomalous and problematically tautologous τεκτόνοιν 'craftsmen' (a synonym for ἐργάταιν) has been widely accepted by modern editors. Stevens voiced a lingering concern, however, over 'what form the rivalry between the poets is supposed to take'. He found suggestions of general rivalry among poets unsatisfactory as explanations, arguing that 'we ought to have two poets quarrelling over a poem which they are presumably composing in collaboration'.[18] There is some evidence that the comic poets collaborated with each other. Eupolis claims to have co-authored Aristophanes' *Knights* in *Dyers* (*Baptai* fr. 89), for example.[19] It is probable also that Euripides was assisted by Cephisophon in composing his lyrics late in his career, but, as Sommerstein demonstrates, this must have been after 411 BC,[20] significantly later than the production of *Andromache* (in the mid-420s). I argue below that the rivalry *is* specific, as Stevens saw, and as the context of the choral ode makes clear, but I suggest that it is intertextual rather than collaborative in that Euripides composes his *Andromache* as a rival to Sophocles' *Hermione*. The dual forms used to describe the two poets engaged in composing their work emphasize the inextricable intertextual link between poets writing rival versions of the same episode.

The comments of the chorus in the second *stasimon* have a clear dramatic relevance. They condemn the practice of 'twin marriages' (*Andr.* 465: δίδυμα λέκτρ') with 'sons of two rival mothers' (*Andr.* 466: ἀμφιμάτορας κόρους).[21] Twin sovereignties (δίπτυχοι τυραννίδες) are called worse for cities to endure than a single one

[18] Stevens (1971) *ad* 476.

[19] On this passage and other evidence suggesting that the poets of old comedy sometimes collaborated with each other, see Halliwell (1989), Storey (2003) 279–88, Sommerstein (2009) 116–35.

[20] Sommerstein (2004). Wright (2010) 174–5 rejects the suggestion of a literal poetic collaboration implied by *Andr.* 476–7.

[21] The translation here is based on the definition of ἀμφιμήτορες in Sommerstein (1987). For Ogden (1996) 19–21, the term is less charged, meaning 'children of the same father but different mothers'.

(*Andr.* 471–2). These cause 'political strife' (*Andr.* 475: στάσιν), and two wives or mothers, like two poets, give rise to 'rivalry' (*Andr.* 467, 477: ἔριν).[22] That the craftsmen have 'given birth' (τεκόντοιν) to their hymn forms a pleasing symmetry of imagery between the close and the opening of this strophic pair, with its references to motherhood and children. The children of rival mothers are in competition with each other just as the songs ('children') of poets are. The 'twin marriages' refer to the conjugal relationships of Hermione and Andromache with Neoptolemus. The former is his official wife, but his concubine Andromache seems to be favoured by him, and in many ways continues to act out the wifely paradigm associated with her Homeric persona (as discussed below). Hermione's insecurities have led her to unscrupulous and aggressive actions against Andromache in Neoptolemus' absence.[23] The fact that Andromache has a child with Neoptolemus exacerbates Hermione's anxieties since she has not yet had any children. She decides to get control of the child and put him to death, and the second antistrophe makes explicit that her actions are caused 'by malignant rivalry' (*Andr.* 490: δύσφρονος ἀμφ' ἔριδος), the implication being that Andromache is a rival because she has produced a son. Similarly the reference to double kingship can easily be associated with the anti-Spartan rhetoric of this play, since Sparta was famed for its two royal families, between whom there had been much political strife in recent years.[24] The reference to rival poets within this focused framework of themes central to *Andromache* implicitly suggests rival poets who have written different versions of this episode. The obvious rival for Euripides' *Andromache* is Sophocles' *Hermione* or *Phthian Women*, which dealt with the same mythic episode and must have been the earlier of the two plays.[25] Euripides would later quote a line from Sophocles' *Hermione* verbatim in his *Bacchae* (*Ba.* 193 = S. fr. 695), and although

[22] Wright (2010) 174 reminds us that poetic rivalry is an example of the positive power of *eris* ('strife', 'rivalry') in Hesiod's *Works and Days* (24–6).

[23] Allan (2000) is particularly sensitive to Hermione's insecurities throughout his analysis; see esp. 68, 72, 99, 107, 116, 130, 189.

[24] The Agiad king Pleistoanax had been exiled from Sparta in the mid-440s for alleged crimes but had been recalled in 428, his return coinciding approximately with the death of the Eurypontid king Archidamus II. On the anti-Spartan rhetoric in *Andromache*, which was produced, of course, while Athens was at war with Sparta, see e.g. Garzya (1951) 111, Stevens (1971) 11–12, Hall (1989) 211–15, 159–60, Lloyd (1994) 5, Allan (2000) 139–44.

[25] Sommerstein (2006*a*) 20–1.

Hermione survives only through meagre fragments, we have enough material to draw some important conclusions, both about Euripides' response to Sophocles and about his use of epic in constructing that response. The motif of doubling, which is important in *Andromache*, can be read in terms of metapoetic rivalry. Aware that his version is secondary in chronological terms to Sophocles, and also to Homer, Euripides gives us 'double the drama', so to speak.

The marriage of Hermione to Neoptolemus is known from the *Odyssey*. When Telemachus arrives in Sparta, Menelaus is celebrating his daughter's wedding, marrying her to Neoptolemus, as he had promised at Troy, and sending her off to Phthia with her new husband (*Andr.* 4.4–10). Eustathius' commentary on *Odyssey* 4.3 summarizes the plot of Sophocles' *Hermione*. It dealt with the aftermath of Hermione having been betrothed to Neoptolemus by her father but also to Orestes by her grandfather Tyndareus in Menelaus' absence. Neoptolemus is killed at the Delphic oracle while attempting to avenge himself on Apollo for the death of his father, after which Hermione is restored to Orestes and bears him a son Tisamenus, named for vengeance (*tisis*) with power (*menos*) after Orestes' successful revenge against his father's murderer (Clytemnestra).[26] Sommerstein's edition of the fragments of *Hermione* shows that it must have been the same play as *Phthian Women*, with Hermione as a central character and a chorus of Phthian women.[27] Aristotle (*Poetics* 1456^{a}1) names *Phthian Women* as an example of a tragedy of character (rather than, say, one of recognition and reversal), and Sophocles presented a particularly nasty brute in his Neoptolemus.[28] Neoptolemus' death at Delphi is known from Pindar and Pherecydes. In Pindar's *Sixth Paean* (100–20) Apollo kills Neoptolemus in his own temple to punish him for his murder of Priam at the altar of Zeus. When Pindar revisits the story in his later *Seventh Nemean* (40–7) Neoptolemus' character is largely rehabilitated. No crime is mentioned, and he is killed by a man with a knife during a quarrel over sacrificial meats, thus fulfilling his destiny of becoming a cult presence at Delphi to oversee the honours given to heroes. The account of Pherecydes also refers to a quarrel over sacrificial meat and the suicide (rather than homicide) of Neoptolemus with a knife (*FGrH* 3 F 64). Sophocles, then, seems to have invented the

[26] Radt (1999) 192, Sommerstein (2006*a*) 26–7.
[27] Sommerstein (2006*a*) 14–16.
[28] Sommerstein (2010) 273.

outrageous motivation of Neoptolemus seeking revenge on the god Apollo for the death of his father Achilles.[29]

There are several details of Euripides' *Andromache* that make sense only when read as intertextual responses to Sophocles' *Hermione*. Sommerstein observes three such issues, which I discuss here in further detail — Neoptolemus' wish to sack the temple of Delphi on his first visit, the explanation for Neoptolemus' burial, and the motivation for the arrival of Orestes.[30] Euripides' Neoptolemus is away at Delphi to *apologize* for his previous madness of demanding reparations from Apollo (*Andr.* 50–5, 1106–8). Orestes will later incite the Delphians against Neoptolemus (*Andr.* 1094–5) by claiming that he has come to Delphi a second time (τὸ δεύτερον) for the same purpose as before (ἐφ' οἷσι καὶ πάρος), eager to sack the temple of Phoebus (Φοίβου ναὸν ἐκπέρσαι θέλων). Since the Delphians kill Neoptolemus inauspiciously in the temple, it seems odd that Neoptolemus should be buried there rather than in Phthia, especially since his body is returned to Phthia from Delphi in Euripides' drama. Clearly there was an established tradition that his tomb was at Delphi (cf. *Nem.* 7.44–7), which Euripides did not wish to contradict. Thetis explains that Neoptolemus should be buried there as a 'reproach' (ὄνειδος) to the Delphians (*Andr.* 1241), although they are driven to the deed by Apollo. His voice is said to have boomed forth from the innermost shrine to rally the armed men, causing the murder to be effected (*Andr.* 1147–52). The killing is impious and Apollo is portrayed very negatively in this play.[31] By making Neoptolemus' tomb a reproach to those who killed him, Euripides risks presenting an unrealistic scenario. It is hardly conceivable that a monument of reproach would be established at Delphi to commemorate a crime sanctioned by Apollo. The dramatic pay-off behind this lack of realism, however, is important. The explanation stresses the *positive* character of Neoptolemus, and the unscrupulous behaviour of Apollo's protégé Orestes.[32] In so doing, Euripides reverses the paradigm of Sophocles whose Neoptolemus in *Hermione* had been the villain, while the Sophoclean Orestes

[29] The innovation may have been inspired by Achilles' desire to punish Apollo in the *Iliad* (22.20), a parallel noted by Sommerstein (2006*a*) 11, and by Allan (2000) 112.

[30] Sommerstein (2006*a*) 20.

[31] Cf. *Andr.* 50–5, 1002–3, 1010–36, 1161–5, 1194–6, 1212.

[32] Allan (2000) 247–53 discusses Apollo's support of Orestes.

seems to have heroically rescued the persecuted Hermione.[33] Indeed, we are already familiar with this Euripidean technique which appears even more radically in his later *Phoenician Women*, as discussed in Ch. 2.

The murder of Neoptolemus may be unfair in Euripides, but it remains conceptualized in the terms put forward by Sophocles. He is paying for his original offence and his apologies count for nothing (*Andr.* 1002–6). Still, there is an awkward silence about what actually happened on the first visit to Delphi. How did Neoptolemus escape punishment then, and how did he manage to return home unscathed to reflect on and regret his actions? Why bother referring to a first visit at all? Why not follow Pindar's *Seventh Nemean*, for example, in exculpating Neoptolemus? The fact of underlining the *second* visit to Delphi in Euripides (*Andr.* 1094: τὸ δεύτερον), subsequent to a first visit outside the scope of the drama, suggests a metapoetic awareness of posteriority in specific relation to Sophocles' *Hermione*.[34] Earlier in Euripides' *Andromache*, the title-character's sufferings are suggestively evoked as δεύτερα 'secondary' or 'subsequent' to her experiences in epic. Menelaus tells Andromache (*Andr.* 372–3) that, if a woman loses her husband, which is equivalent to losing her life, all the other things a woman might suffer are δεύτερα 'secondary'. Menelaus has Hermione in mind, but his statement expresses the very premiss of Euripides' drama in relation to the epic Andromache. As was made famous by the *Iliad*, she has lost her husband, a fact repeated relentlessly in Euripides' play (*Andr.* 2–9, 97, 103–4, 111–12, 168, 171, 203, 399–400, 403, 456, 523–5, 656, 908, cf. 1023–4). By representing Andromache's δούλειον ἦμαρ 'day of slavery' (*Andr.* 99), Euripides actualizes the Homeric Hector's fears that she will lose her life of privilege (*Il.* 6.454–61) when she suffers the 'new grief' (νέον . . . ἄλγος) of losing the husband who can ward off the δούλιον ἦμαρ

[33] Sommerstein (2006*a*) 17–19 sketches out the likely course of events in *Hermione*.

[34] There is no evidence that Aeschylus wrote on this episode at all. Two other 5th-cent. tragedians, Philocles (fr. 2), and Theognis (fr. 2), are known to have produced plays on the issue of Hermione's 'two marriages', but in both these cases an entirely different scenario was envisaged where Hermione was already married to Orestes and pregnant with his child when Menelaus removed her, gave her to Neoptolemus, and she bore Amphictyon. Cf. Sommerstein (2006*a*) 2, 6–7.

'day of slavery' (*Il.* 6.462–3).[35] The drama's evocation of Iliadic authority means that Andromache springs to mind much more than Hermione when Menelaus generalizes about the fate of women who lose their husbands.

Andromache does not seem to have featured at all in *Hermione*, and it is probable that Euripides invented the circumstances of Andromache and Hermione both living under one roof in Phthia.[36] This enabled him to produce two simultaneous literary continuations, one of an epic model and another of a tragic one. Performance may well have consolidated this sense of dual continuation since Andromache has no lines after her exit at 765 and most likely never returned to the stage.[37] This would cast the first half of the play, in broad strokes, as the continuation of Homeric epic and the second half as the continuation of Sophoclean tragedy. I suggest that through careful exploitation of the term *deuteron* (which occurs only twice in this drama), Euripides casts his work metapoetically as a twofold exercise in intertextuality with the epic tradition (*Andr.* 372) and with Sophocles (*Andr.* 1094). The term *deuteron*, meaning 'second' in a sequence, or 'later', is loaded with metapoetic potential elsewhere in Euripides. The extant *Hippolytus*, itself a rewritten version of Euripides' first *Hippolytus* play (as was discussed in the last chapter) contains a pointed comment made by the Nurse at a crucial moment in the drama. She has just learned of Phaedra's passion for Hippolytus, also

[35] The allusion is noted by Stevens (1971) *ad* 99, Garner (1990) 133, Lloyd (1994) *ad* 99.

[36] Fantham (1986) 268, Allan (2000) 17–19, Sommerstein (2006*a*) 5.

[37] Several scholars, e.g. Kamerbeek (1943), Erbse (1966), Golder (1983), argued that Andromache and her son must have been mute characters in the final scene. The argument is linked to the view that Andromache is the central and unifying character of this drama, put forward by Kamerbeek and Erbse in most detail. Subsequent scholars have not agreed with this view. For Garzya (1951), for example, Hermione is the central character; but Mossman (1996) has largely brought closure to the debate by demonstrating that the absent Neoptolemus is the most powerful unifying figure of the drama. The argument for Andromache's presence in the final scenes assumes her complete silence when the body of Neoptolemus is returned from Delphi. After claiming Neoptolemus as her champion, and that of her son (cf. *Andr.* 268–9), it would be extraordinary for her to be present and utter no expression of sorrow. The fact that Peleus laments the complete extinction of his house (*Andr.* 1177–8), without considering the grandson whom he had vigorously defended, also points to the absence of Andromache and her son. This and other reasons for Andromache's probable absence from the stage after 765 are discussed by Steidle (1968) 118–20, Lee (1975) 5 with n. 12, Stevens (1971) 7, 10–11, Mastronarde (1979) 99–101, 115, Torrance (2005) 39.

the subject of the first *Hippolytus*. The news at first gives her a dreadful sudden fright (*Hipp.* 434: δεινὸν ἐξαίφνης φόβον), also the kind of reaction Euripides' first play is thought to have caused among spectators.[38] On reflection, however, she realizes that she was being silly and that 'second reflections in mortals are somehow cleverer' (*Hipp.* 435–6: κἀν βροτοῖς| αἱ δεύτεραί πως φροντίδες σοφώτεραι). This seems to be a thinly veiled suggestion not only that secondary reflections, in general terms, are preferable, but also that *this* second version is better than Euripides' first with an implicit hope that the audience will recognize that.[39] Similarly in *Suppliants* (383–8), Theseus hopes to settle matters at Thebes with Aeschylean diplomacy. If this fails, Theseus prescribes οἵδε δεύτεροι λόγοι 'these subsequent narratives' (*Supp.* 389), asking the herald to announce that Theseus will bring war to Thebes (*Supp.* 390–4). The first narrative of Aeschylus' *Eleusinians* is implicitly acknowledged, while Euripides casts his own version (which *will* require a war) as a secondary narrative.[40]

Euripides' *Andromache*, then, is a secondary version of Sophocles' *Hermione* and a continuation, both of the *Iliad* and of *Hermione*.[41] We have observed that Andromache's Iliadic past is stressed heavily in this play, but Euripides also includes details from the epic cycle and one otherwise unattested piece of information in his portrayal of Andromache. The death of Astyanax, who is 'hurled from the high towers' of Troy (*Andr.* 10: ῥιφθέντα πύργων . . . ἀπ' ὀρθίων), is not part of the *Iliad* but featured in the *Little Iliad* and in the *Sack of Troy*. In the *Little Iliad* he is 'hurled from the tower' of Troy (fr. 18, West: ῥιφθέντι ἀπὸ τοῦ πύργου, cf. fr. 29, West: ῥῖψε . . . ἀπὸ πύργου) not by a decision of the Greeks but by Neoptolemus' private desire to kill him (fr. 18, West). Neoptolemus' murder of Astyanax also appears with

[38] See Ch. 3, pp. 146–7.

[39] This kind of hope is voiced explicitly in Aristophanes' *Clouds* (515–35). See Ch. 5, pp. 290–1 on the parallels between *Clouds* and *Hippolytus* as rewritten plays.

[40] See further Ch. 3, pp. 166–7, on the intertextual relationship between Euripides' *Suppliants* and Aeschylus' *Eleusinans*.

[41] 'Continuations' of various sorts ('cyclical', 'unfaithful', 'murderous', etc.) are, of course, important categories in the literary theory developed by Genette (1997) 161–205. He differentiates (206–7) between a 'continuation' as an 'allographic completion' and a 'sequel' as an 'autographic prolongation', but conflation of these two modes is evident in Euripidean drama. His *Andromache* and *Iphigenia among the Taurians*, for example, are allographic prolongations of Sophocles' *Hermione* and Aeschylus' *Oresteia*, respectively.

reasonable frequency in art.[42] In the *Sack of Troy*, however, the murder is attributed to Odysseus (Arg. 4, cf. fr. 3, West), and this is followed by Euripides in his *Trojan Women* (721–5), where Odysseus is at least responsible for persuading the Greeks to throw Astyanax from the towers of Troy. The *Andromache* is strangely silent about the identity of the killer, and Allan is right to suggest that this 'contributes to the play's general improvements of Neoptolemus'.[43] One wonders, though, why Odysseus is not named as the killer. This would have exonerated Neoptolemus altogether, while evoking epic authority, and Euripides is usually so scrupulous in providing such mythological details. I would argue that Euripides deliberately avoids either option for dramatic reasons. Neoptolemus is not named because, as Allan implies, this would have interfered with the positive portrayal of Achilles' son. At the same time, much of this play's tension is developed through the uncomfortable fact that Andromache seems to have a positive relationship with the son of her husband's murderer (*Andr.* 170–3).[44] The identities of Neoptolemus as 'son of Achilles' and of Andromache as 'wife of Hector' are very much stressed in the drama, as Susanna Phillippo has shown.[45] Andromache claims that Neoptolemus has pushed her aside (*Andr.* 30), but there remains evidence of a continuing close relationship between them.[46]

Particularly poignant is Hermione's description of Andromache as δορίκτητος 'prize of the spear' (*Andr.* 155). Kyriakou observes that this casts Andromache as the true object of Neoptolemus' affections since this rare word, a *hapax legomenon* in Homer, is used by Achilles in the *Iliad* to refer to Briseis, in the famous passage where he professes to love the girl in spite of her captive status (9.343).[47] Certainly, Hermione's perception seems to be that there is a strong affectionate relationship between Andromache and Neoptolemus,

[42] Normally in tandem with his murder of Priam; see *LIMC* II.1, 931–3 (*s.v.* Astyanax) with plates in II.2, 682–5.

[43] Allan (2000) 26.

[44] Belfiore (2000), Torrance (2005); cf. Fantham (1986) 269–70.

[45] Phillippo (1995) esp. 367–71.

[46] Whether or not the relationship continued to be a sexual one is not entirely clear. Storey (1989) 18 argues that it has ceased, *contra* Kovacs (1980) 9–20 (esp. 15–18), who suggests that Andromache's statements do not exclude the possibility. Lloyd (1994) 6–9 discusses the fact that 'monogamy' among epic heroes does not exclude liaisons with slaves.

[47] Kyriakou (1997) 17.

and Andromache confirms that she relies on him as Hermione suggests (*Andr.* 268–9). So Andromache has been 'sleeping with the enemy', as Elizabeth Belfiore puts it,[48] and is now assimilated to the family of her natural enemy after producing a child. Naming Odysseus as responsible for Astyanax' death would dilute this tension by pitting Andromache against a different and external enemy. Neoptolemus' first visit to Delphi was impious and is left vague, and it may be that the silence over Astyanax' killer is similarly purposeful. We know that Neoptolemus has committed outrageous crimes in the past, but we are asked to focus on his current noble actions and behaviour. In fact, the death of Neoptolemus conclusively blurs the distinction between Andromache's two 'husbands' since his vicious treatment at the hands of the Delphians and Orestes and the wounds he sustains are very much reminiscent of Hector's death in the *Iliad*.[49]

The threat to the life of Andromache's child in the play is a pattern repeated from epic,[50] and it is significant for the parallel that there is a single male child.[51] This new child, Andromache says, has created a 'double burden' (*Andr.* 396: ἄχθος . . . διπλοῦν) for her, in addition to her existing suffering. He remains unnamed and his mythological importance is suppressed until the very end of the play. It is only when Thetis foretells the survival of the child, and Andromache's fate to be queen of Molossia, that we can finally identify the child as the mythological figure Molossus. Until that point, he is simply the bastard son, whose life hangs in the balance before the arrival of Peleus. The issue of legitimacy is important in this play. Peleus argues that many bastards are better than legitimate children (*Andr.* 638). The creation of a domestic quarrel involving an illegitimate son, favoured by his father's family, may have been inspired by the opening of *Odyssey* 4. Menelaus is celebrating *two* weddings when Telemachus arrives in Sparta, that of Hermione to Neoptolemus (as noted above), and that of his only son by a slave (*Od.* 4.12: ἐκ δούλης), for whom he has chosen a Spartan bride. The gods, we are told, did not grant Helen further children after the birth of Hermione (*Od.* 4.12–14). The weddings 'of his son and his noble daughter' (*Od.* 4.4)

[48] Belfiore (2000) 81–100; she argues (82) that, in this play, 'inappropriate relationships with enemies play the same role that kin murder does in other tragedies'.
[49] De Jong (1991) 82, Allan (2000) 112–13, Torrance (2005) 59–66.
[50] Sorum (1995) 377.
[51] Allan (2000) 15.

are celebrated simultaneously with the implication that the son is being legitimized.[52] The poet offers no direct comment on the son's impact on family dynamics, but his name, Megapenthes, with its obvious meaning of 'Great-grief', is suggestive of some (domestic?) strife caused by his existence.

Should Hermione, like her mother, be expected to accept that the status of a concubine's son might be legitimized or formalized in some way, if she does not produce a son?[53] Andromache's rhetoric suggests that her own son can never be an heir when she asks sarcastically whether the Phthians would tolerate her children as kings if Hermione does not produce a child (*Andr.* 201–2). But epic parallels show that this *is* a real possibility, and it seems clear that Andromache's purpose 'is to deny a possible motive'.[54] Andromache certainly implies that Hermione should treat the child well. She explains to Hermione how better to please Neoptolemus as a wife, arguing that even a woman who is married to a bad husband should be devoted to him (*Andr.* 213–14). She then claims to have suckled Hector's bastard children when Aphrodite tripped him up (*Andr.* 222–5), and concludes her speech with further generalizations on how to be a good wife.[55] The detail that Andromache nursed Hector's illegitimate children is arresting since it appears nowhere else in our sources. Astyanax is Hector's only child in the *Iliad*. Hellanicus mentions the expulsion of Scamandrius (Astyanax) 'and the other sons of Hector' from Greece by Neoptolemus (*FGrH* 4 F 31.68–9: *καὶ τῶν ἄλλων Ἑκτοριδῶν*), but there is no indication of who these sons were, whether or not they were illegitimate, and neither is there any mention of Andromache. Andromache's claim has generally been seen as an invention by Euripides.[56] While Euripides' deviations from Sophocles are cast in terms of poetic rivalry, in his allusions to epic Euripides tends to confirm epic events or allude to epic authority. This new information about Andromache, similarly, appropriates

[52] Ogden (1996) 24 observes that Helen 'had little to complain about, since she had herself failed to produce a son for Menelaus'.

[53] Sorum (1995) 379 argues that Andromache 'ironically becomes the center and symbol of the legitimate household' through the conflation of past and present.

[54] Goebel (1989) 35.

[55] In Torrance (2005), I discussed how Andromache acts more like the paradigmatic Homeric 'wife' than the slave-concubine she has technically become. Vester (2009) develops some similar arguments, apparently unaware of Torrance (2005).

[56] So Lloyd (1994) *ad* 222–8, cf. Allan (2000) 15, 182.

rather than challenges Homeric models. The *Iliad*, in fact, provides the precedent for a wife pleasing her husband by nursing his bastard son in the figure of Theano, wife of Antenor (5.69–71).[57] Euripides' innovation thus reinvigorates the paradigm of a wife's exemplary marital devotion to a husband that the Homeric Andromache represents.

This is confirmed metapoetically by Hermione's response at *Andr.* 234: *τί σεμνομυθεῖς κἀς ἀγῶν' ἔρχῃ λόγων*; 'why do you tell haughty tales (*semomutheis*) and enter into a contest (*agōn*) of speeches?' The verb *σεμνομυθέω* is rare, occurring here and once in the extant *Hippolytus*. It is a compound of *σεμνός* 'revered', 'noble', and in a negative sense (as is surely meant here by Hermione) 'haughty', and *μυθέω* meaning 'to speak', 'to tell', related, of course, to the noun *mythos* 'tale' whose importance in Euripides we have already discussed. Hermione's language thus underlines the mythological novelty of Andromache's claim, drawing attention to the fact that Euripides has invented this detail for thematic purposes. The example from *Hippolytus* corroborates this reading since the verb has a similar metapoetic potential in that play too. Phaedra is distraught at her Nurse's advice to face her passion for Hippolytus rather than commit suicide to save her reputation as she had resolved to do. Phaedra begs the Nurse to give her advice that will gain her honour instead (*Hipp.* 486–9). *τί σεμνομυθεῖς*; 'why do you tell tales of nobility?', the Nurse responds, stressing that Phaedra needs the man (i.e. to quell her passion) rather than dignified speeches (*Hipp.* 490–1). The 'tale of Phaedra's nobility', so to speak, is this drama's claim to originality. The Nurse's language thus represents a further strand in that tragedy's complex representation of its poetic status as a new and improved version of the story.

In addition to underlining the novelty of Andromache's claim, Hermione also draws metatheatrical attention, in the same line, to the fact that the argument with Andromache will develop into a full-scale *agōn*, when she accuses Andromache of embarking on an *agōn* of speeches (*Andr.* 234). An important structural feature of Greek tragedy, the formal debate between two characters, the *agōn*, was especially favoured by Euripides. Later at *Andr.* 328, Andromache too will draw attention to the fact that, by attacking her and her son,

[57] The parallel is also noted by Stevens (1971) *ad* 224–5, and by Lloyd (1994) *ad* 222–8.

Menelaus has (inappropriately) entered into an *agōn* with a slave-woman.[58] Euripidean debate scenes are often clearly marked, with characters metatheatrically announcing the imminence of a tragic *agōn*,[59] and the 'artificiality', or structural rigidity, of the Euripidean *agōn*, particularly in contrast to the *agōn* in Sophocles, has been discussed by several scholars.[60] Chris Collard defended Euripides against charges of irrelevancy or bad integration in his formal debates,[61] and indeed there is no reason why 'artifice' should be construed as a negative quality of Euripidean dramatic technique.[62] The self-proclamatory nature of the Euripidean *agōn* is simply one of his characteristic metapoetic strategies. Just as Euripides often draws attention to the imminent change of fortune for characters in his dramas through exploitation of the term *metabolē* (as discussed in Ch. 1), so too he guides his audience to expect a formal debate scene by having a character announce an *agōn*.

The argument between Menelaus and Peleus in *Andromache* is not represented self-consciously at the outset as an *agōn*, perhaps because it 'is integrated into the action to an unusual extent',[63] but the closing words of the argument are rather enigmatic and metatheatrically suggestive. After discussing his expectations of Neoptolemus, Menelaus turns his attention to Peleus with these words (*Andr.* 743–5): *τοὺς σοὺς δὲ μύθους ῥαιδίως ἐγὼ φέρω· | σκιὰ γὰρ ἀντίστοιχος ὡς φωνὴν ἔχεις | ἀδύνατος οὐδὲν ἄλλο πλὴν λέγειν μόνον* '*your* tales (*mythoi*) I bear easily; for like a corresponding (*antistoichos*) shadow you have a voice, incapable of anything at all save speaking.' Old men and mortals more generally are likened to shadows elsewhere in

[58] McClure (1999) 158–204 analyses this play in terms of gendered speech, arguing (183–6) that the *agōn* between Menelaus and Andromache casts Menelaus as a male intruder into female affairs whose ineffectiveness—McClure suggests effeminacy, specifically—is underlined by Andromache's verbal dominance of the *agōn*.

[59] Lloyd (1994) *ad* 234 notes the following parallels 'for self-conscious use of agonistic terminology in an agon': *Hcld.* 116, *Supp.* 427, 465, *Pho.* 588, *Or.* 491.

[60] Duchemin (1968), Lloyd (1992) 19–36, Collard (2003), Barker (2009), 7, 267–365, who reads the tragic *agōn* within the broader context of literary presentations of debate in Greek assemblies, with detailed analyses of Sophocles' *Ajax* and Euripides' *Hecuba*.

[61] Collard (2003), and cf. Conacher (1981).

[62] Scodel (2000) argues, in a dense and complex analysis, that rhetoric in Euripides is self-consciously marked and framed, by references to speakers and speeches, as a rhetorical 'performance', which requires and triggers a more detached audience evaluation than other kinds of dramatic speech.

[63] Lloyd (1994) 135.

tragedy, a comparison that emphasizes their frailty.[64] However, this is the earliest use of the term *antistoichos*, which appears nowhere else in classical poetry, and only rarely in prose authors of the classical period.[65] Essentially it means 'corresponding',[66] but what exactly is meant by the unusual image of 'a corresponding shadow'? *LSJ s.v.* ἀντίστοιχος 2 suggest as a translation for this instance 'standing over against' rather than 'corresponding', but this hardly makes better sense. Our passage is also referenced in *LSJ s.v.* σκιά with the gloss 'like the *shadow* that is one's double'. This is much clearer, and we can compare the term δίστοιχος 'in two rows', used metatheatrically in Aeschylus' *Theōroi* (fr. 78c.38) to refer to a formation of choral dancing.[67] If Peleus is accused of being a shadow corresponding to a doublet of himself, and one characterized by speech, it is possible that he is being compared to a corresponding Peleus character from another play, and the most relevant would be the Peleus from *Hermione*.[68]

Sommerstein shows that in *Hermione*, as in *Andromache*, the final scene must have featured the return of Neoptolemus' body to Phthia and Peleus' lament over his grandson.[69] In both scenes he is the epitome of the frail and broken old man whose only ability is to lament (using his voice). Menelaus' invective encapsulates proleptically what will happen to Peleus in this tale. Of course, in *Andromache* (1255–6), he will ultimately be made immortal by Thetis in the *exodos*. She instructs him to bury Neoptolemus at Delphi and then to go to wait for her in a hollow cave on Sepias' ancient cape (*Andr.* 1263–8). A further 'shadow' of Peleus suggests itself here. A cave on the Sepiades islands seems to have been the setting of Sophocles'

[64] Cf. esp. fr. 509 from one of Euripides' *Melanippe* plays: φωνὴ καὶ σκιά γέρων ἀνήρ 'an old man is just voice and shadow'; mortals are shadows in Sophocles, as in *Ajax the Locrian* fr. 13, and fr. 945 from an unidentified play.

[65] Examples in prose authors include Aristotle *On the Gait of Animals* 708^{b}8, 11, 13, 15, 31, Aristotle *Problems* 894^{a}19, and cf. Xen. *Anab.* 5.4.12.3.

[66] Though in *On the Gait of Animals* it also means something like 'ranged opposite in rows or pairs' (*LSJ s.v.* ἀντίστοιχος).

[67] See Kamerbeek (1955) 10, Kaimio et al. (2001) 41, and see pp. 278–9 on other metapoetic episodes in *Theōroi*.

[68] The unusual image of a corresponding shadow might also be an early evocation of shadow-puppet drama, which seems to have become popular in the 4th cent. BC and may underlie Plato's famous Cave allegory (*Rep.* 7.514–21), on which see Gocer (1999).

[69] Sommerstein (2006*a*) 15–19.

Peleus. The tragedy dealt with Neoptolemus' rescue of Peleus, who had taken refuge in the cave, from the sons of Acastus. It ended, apparently, with the appearance of Thetis and the departure of Neoptolemus, Peleus, and Thetis from the island and their return to Phthia.[70] Sophocles' *Peleus* must have been performed before 424 BC when it was first quoted in Aristophanes' *Knights* (1099). It was more than likely produced, then, before *Andromache*, which is usually also dated to *c.*425 BC.[71] The details of the cave and the location, in addition to the presence of Thetis in *Andromache*, suggest an intertextual dialogue with *Peleus* in the *exodos*. Where the cave in Sophocles' *Peleus* was the starting point of the journey *to* Phthia, in Euripides' *Andromache* it is the end-point of the journey *from* Phthia and the beginning of Peleus' life as an immortal.[72]

The final piece of evidence for an intertextual allusion to Sophocles has to do with the arrival of Orestes. He turns up in *Andromache* after a period of covert observation of the situation in Phthia (*Andr.* 957–63), and he makes a strange point of stressing that he has come *not* because he respected Hermione's messages (*Andr.* 964: *οὐ σέβων ἐπιστολάς*), but because he intended to send her away from Phthia and reclaim her as his bride, since she had previously been betrothed to him (*Andr.* 966–87). This unmasks Orestes' self-interested motivation, as Allan observes,[73] but it remains very odd indeed that there has been no previous mention of any messages sent by Hermione, especially since Euripides is usually so conscientious in providing clear explanations for the details in his plots. Commentators have struggled to make good dramatic sense of this line. Lloyd, following Kovacs, suggests that it stresses Orestes' independent initiative, Diggle feels the line is possibly corrupt, but lets it stand, Stevens prefers Hermann's acceptance of manuscript P's *μένων* 'waiting', i.e. 'not waiting for your messages', rather than *σέβων* 'respecting', although he concedes that the latter is the *lectio difficilior* (and so should be

[70] Radt (1999) 390–4, Lloyd-Jones (2003) 252–7, Sommerstein (2006*a*) 2–3 with n. 7.

[71] Stevens (1971) 15–19, Lloyd (1994) 11–12.

[72] In his own *Peleus*, Euripides most likely dramatized the attempted seduction of Peleus by the wife of his host Acastus in a Potiphar's wife type of plot similar to that of *Stheneboea*; see Van Looy (2000) 531–6, Kannicht (2004) 615–7, Collard and Cropp (2008) viii. 72–3.

[73] Allan (2000) 110.

preferable), and the process of corruption obscure.[74] Sommerstein, however, presents a strong case for supposing that the line alludes to Orestes' arrival in Sophocles' *Hermione*, where he *had* in fact come in response to Hermione's messages. In that play, Neoptolemus seems to have treated Hermione so badly that she was desperate to escape from the beginning. In the context of her earlier betrothal to Orestes, it stands to reason that she would appeal to him for aid, and there is no indication that Menelaus (another potential source of support) was a character in *Hermione*.[75]

To these probabilities outlined by Sommerstein, we can add the parallel of Sophocles' *Electra* where the title character and her brother Orestes have been communicating through messages (S. *El.* 169–70, though Orestes' presence is hidden from Electra for much of that play). Moreover, there *is* an abused-wife figure in Euripides' *Andromache* who sends messages for assistance. Andromache claims to have sent numerous messages to Peleus, hoping he would come to her aid (*Andr.* 81, 561–2). Andromache, Hermione, Neoptolemus, Orestes, Peleus, and Thetis are all characters in Euripides, created, in part, as a response to Sophocles. Andromache is the abused and helpless victim that Sophocles' Hermione was in *Hermione*, while Euripides' Hermione has become a vindictive aggressor, the opposite of her Sophoclean counterpart. Neoptolemus and Orestes have had the essence of their characters reversed. Neoptolemus, who was impious in Sophocles is now seeking divine approval and Orestes has become the impious activist at Delphi. Peleus, in the final part of the play, becomes a doublet of himself as he appeared in *Hermione*, and his exchange with Thetis recasts the cave on a Sepiades island as the location for progression to immortality rather than the point from which he is rescued and returned to Phthia, as in Sophocles' *Peleus*.[76]

Orestes' declaration that he has *not* come in response to messages is also a declaration that he will be a different type of character from his Sophoclean predecessor. Indeed he will be responsible for

[74] Lloyd (1994) *ad* 964, Kovacs (1980) 105 n. 48, Diggle (1984) 318 (app. crit.), Stevens (1971) *ad* 964.

[75] Sommerstein (2006*a*) 17–21 and (2010) 272.

[76] The one character we have left out is Euripides' Menelaus. As a father-figure who intervenes for his child but then leaves her in the lurch (cf. Lee (1975) 11–12), he could well be read as the negative counterpart to Phoenix, the old tutor, who probably went with Peleus to Delphi to try to save Neoptolemus in Sophocles. On the likely involvement of Phoenix in *Hermione*, see Sommerstein (2006*a*) 15–19.

scheming the murder of Neoptolemus at Delphi, and his new involvement in this portion of the myth is underlined metapoetically when the scheme is described as a *mythos*. The Messenger reports how Neoptolemus announces his wish to make amends for his previous mistake (*Andr.* 1106–8). 'Then the story (*mythos*) of Orestes was revealed as prevailing to a great extent, [the story] that my master (*sc.* Neoptolemus) was lying and had come for shameful purposes' (*Andr.* 1109–11: κἀνταῦθ' Ὀρέστου μῦθος ἰσχύων μέγα | ἐφαίνεθ', ὡς ψεύδοιτο δεσπότης ἐμὸς, | ἥκων ἐπ' αἰσχροῖς). Orestes had earlier boasted of having set in place 'such a great contrivance against him woven with immovable mesh' (*Andr.* 995–6: τοία γὰρ αὐτῷ μηχανὴ πεπλεγμένη | βρόχοις ἀκινήτοισιν). The plot is 'immovable' because Orestes has received sworn pledges from the Delphians (*Andr.* 1000), who are thus bound to perpetrating the plan in keeping with the sanctity of oaths. The notion of an immovable *mythos* being created in the play is suggestive of the drama's own fixity as a recorded work of literature. It seems to be no accident that, as we have seen elsewhere in Euripides, the term *mythos* is used at a moment when the plot deviates from earlier poetic treatments and presents a new version of events. The *Andromache* is thus marked by trigger words of doubling and myth-making that metapoetically announce its status as a double continuation, of Homer and of Sophocles, as a rival to the latter, and as a new version of this myth.

TWICE THE TRAGEDY: *HECUBA*

Euripides' *Hecuba* is similar to *Andromache* in its intertextual responses to Sophocles and to epic. Both plays were produced in the mid-420s.[77] Both are continuations of Homeric epic,[78] and reinterpretations of

[77] *Andromache* and *Hecuba* belong to the same group (along with *Suppliants*) assigned to the mid-420s on metrical and stylistic grounds (Zieliński (1925) 140–1, 153, 238–9, Cropp and Fick (1985) 23, 60). On the date of *Hecuba*, see further Collard (1991) 34–5, Gregory (1999) xii–xv, Matthiessen (2008) 3–5.

[78] It will be clear that I disagree fundamentally with the position of King (1985), who argued, regarding *Hecuba*, that (47): 'Instead of appropriating the *Iliad* as an authority to validate the ideas in his own text, [Euripides] seems intent on destroying the authority it . . . enjoyed among the Athenian people' and on creating (51) 'a grim parody of the *Iliad*'.

Sophoclean models to which a second plot has been added. *Hecuba* dramatizes the sacrifice of Polyxena to the ghost of Achilles shortly after the fall of Troy and Hecuba's subsequent devastation. The play contains several echoes of the *Iliad*. The terrible plight of slavery for the Trojan women, envisaged by Hector in *Iliad* 6 (447–65) should the city fall, is evoked by Polyxena, who finds death a preferable alternative (*Hec.* 357–78).[79] Judith Mossman draws attention to many Homeric concerns which resurface in *Hecuba*, such as proper funeral arrangements, ritual mourning, the importance of family, women supporting each other, the concept of reciprocal gratitude (χάρις), and relationships between enemies of a long war.[80] These concerns are transposed to a new context in Euripides, and Polyxena does not feature in Homer, but her death had been treated in the Cyclic epics and in Sophocles' *Polyxena*. Over this episode, Euripides superimposes a savage revenge plot, which seems to have been his own invention.[81] It is revealed that Polydorus, a son of Priam and Hecuba, who had been sent with a reserve of Trojan gold to their Thracian ally Polymestor for safe-keeping, has been murdered by his host for the gold.[82] The figure of Polymestor is completely unknown before Euripides' drama, but Renate Schlesier and Froma Zeitlin have shown that he is modelled, in several important respects, on the Thracian king Lycurgus who featured in the *Iliad* and also in Aeschylus' lost *Lycurgeia* trilogy.[83] Already devastated by the sacrifice of Polyxena, Hecuba's grief is doubled by this new murder and she undertakes to avenge herself on Polymestor for his crime.

Although the shadow of epic looms large over *Hecuba*, Euripides deviates from epic tradition in some details more radically than he does in *Andromache* through the introduction of Polydorus as Hecuba's son. In the *Iliad*, Polydorus was the son of Priam not by Hecuba, but by Laothoe, and thus was the brother of Lycaon (*Il.* 21.84–91, 22.46–8). He appeared only briefly on the battlefield

[79] Collard (1991) *ad* 359–66, Mossman (1999) 22–4.

[80] Mossman (1999) 20–9.

[81] Collard (1991) 34, Gantz (1993) 660, Keyser (1997) 132–4, Mossman (1999) 30–1, Gregory (1999) xvii, Matthiessen (2008) 7.

[82] Thalmann (1993) proposes an interesting reading of *Hecuba*, which he sees as inspired by Aeschylus' *Oresteia*. Although I agree that Euripides was seriously influenced by the *Oresteia* in his dramatic compositions, the allusions Thalmann proposes (maiden sacrifice, and female revenge, for example), seem too broad in terms of the context of the Trojan War to relate specifically to the *Oresteia*, particularly when other more mythologically relevant literary antecedents are being evoked.

[83] Schlesier (1988) esp. 127–34, Zeitlin (1996) 178–83.

before being killed by Achilles at the beginning of his ferocious *aristeia*. The youngest and most beloved of Priam's sons, inexperienced in combat, Polydorus had entered the battlefield against his father's instructions, becoming easy prey for Achilles' spear (*Il.* 20.407–18). The Iliadic precursor of Polydorus as the youngest of Priam's sons, unskilled in battle, is acknowledged in the prologue spoken by the ghost of Polydorus (*Hec.* 13–15). This information, along with Priam's fear that Troy could fall (*Hec.* 4–6), is given as the explanation for Polydorus being sent to stay with Polymestor in Thrace. Nevertheless, Polydorus' ghost identifies himself as *Ἑκάβης παῖς γεγὼς τῆς Κισσέως* 'having come into existence as the child of Hecuba, daughter of Cisseus' (*Hec.* 3) in direct contradiction of his maternal Homeric genealogy. In fact, identifying Hecuba as the daughter of Cisseus is also a deviation from epic. In the *Iliad* (16.718), Hecuba is the daughter of Dymas, and the historian Pherecydes concurs on this point (*FGrH* 3 F 136).

Euripides seems to have conflated Hecuba's father with the Thracian king Cisses (*Κισσῆς*), apparently an alternative to Cisseus,[84] father of Theano in the *Iliad* (6.298–9, 11.223–6).[85] Several scholars have discussed the possible significance of his association with Hecuba, apparently invented by Euripides. Mossman wonders whether this foreshadows the savagery of Hecuba's revenge, since Thracians are stereotypically violent in Greek thought, but concludes that this 'should not be pressed too far'.[86] Schlesier and Zeitlin read a Dionysiac reference into the name, which means 'ivy-crowned', drawing a connection to the Dionysiac elements of the play.[87] The name appears as an epithet in an unattributed fragment of Aeschylus (fr. 341), adduced by both Schlesier and Zeitlin, in the phrase *ὁ κισσεὺς Ἀπόλλων* 'ivy-crowned Apollo', also referred to as a Bacchic seer in the same fragment.[88] Sommerstein, following West, however, has attributed the fragment to Aeschylus' Dionysiac tragedy *Bassarids* (frr. 23.2 + 341, Radt = fr. 23a, Sommerstein), and reads *ὁ κισσεὺς ἀπόλλων* 'the ivy-crowned

[84] Gregory (1995) 389 n. 3; Lattimore (1951) transliterates 'Kisseus'.

[85] Gregory (1999) *ad* 3, cf. Matthiessen (2008) *ad* 3, 6.

[86] Mossman (1999) 34 n. 33; on stereotypical Thracian savagery see Hall (1989) 103–6, and Mossman (1999) 185–6.

[87] Schlesier (1988) 133, Zeitlin (1996) 177; on Hecuba and the Trojan women as maenads, see also C. Segal (1993) 179–82, 221–2.

[88] Schlesier (1988) 112 n. 3, Zeitlin (1996) 177 n. 12.

destroyer' where the clever pun refers to Bacchus himself, whose worship has been abandoned by Orpheus in favour of Apollo.[89] This reading reinforces the Dionysiac associations of the name. As Zeitlin, stresses, however, it is only much later in *Hecuba* that the importance of the god Dionysus becomes apparent (in particular through his oracle, *Hec.* 1265–7), so that 'the mention of the god works *retroactively* to give shape and meaning to all that has occurred'.[90]

Justina Gregory has also observed several significant implications of this new and intertextual genealogy. She shows that Hecuba's Thracian father anchors her story to Thrace and makes sense of her predicted metamorphosis into a dog and subsequent death in Thrace.[91] Gregory also demonstrates how the interchangeability of Hecuba and Theano may have suggested itself to Euripides from the events of *Iliad* 6, where Theano (as priestess of Athena) takes over from Hecuba in the presentation of the peplos to Athena at Troy.[92] There is a further and important implication here, though. We observed in our discussion of *Andromache* that Theano is presented in the *Iliad* (5.69–71) as rearing the child of her husband by another woman. By making Hecuba the daughter of Cisseus, Euripides associates her with Theano as a woman who has been 'mother' to her husband's extramarital child, nursing the child with as much care as she did her own children (*Il.* 5.70–1). The deviation from traditional genealogy thus remains couched in epic authority on multiple levels,[93] and the tragic precedent of Orestes' Nurse in Aeschylus'

[89] Sommerstein (2008) iii. 18–21, West (1990) 46.

[90] Zeitlin (1996) 175, emphasis added.

[91] Gregory (1995) 391–3. *Hec.* 1261–73 is the earliest firm literary reference to Hecuba's metamorphosis. Nevertheless, the brevity of the description and the lack of detail (as also in *Alexandros* fr. 62h) suggest a clear antecedent now unknown to us, and it seems unlikely that this was a Euripidean invention (*pace* Collard (1991) *ad* 1265). Keyser (1997) 134 leads with the possibility that the canification is 'somehow not Euripides' invention'. Stephanopoulos (1980) 82–3 argued that *PMG* fr. 965 (adespota), which casts Hecuba as a fiery-eyed bitch, is pre-Euripidean, though Mossman (1999) 35 protests that the fragment is 'entirely undatable'. She makes the point, however, that Euripides would be unlikely to invent the aition for the name Cynossema, and I agree that Euripidean *aitia* are unlikely to have been entirely invented (see Ch. 1, p. 38). We may compare also the condensed reference to the phantom Helen at E. *El.* 1281–3, a mythological variant we know was dealt with previously by Stesichorus in his *Palinode*, and later, of course, by Euripides in *Helen*.

[92] Gregory (1995) 393.

[93] *Pace* King (1985) 47; Gregory (1995) 394–5 sees further parallels between Polydorus in *Hecuba* and Iphidamas, named grandson of Cisseus in the *Iliad*.

Libation Bearers has taught us that nursing a child provides a more powerful 'mother–child' bond than simply giving birth. If we wonder how Hecuba has suddenly become the mother of Polydorus, her identification as the daughter of Cisseus provides a logical intertextual explanation. She is aligned with Theano, an epic model who took on the role of being a mother to her husband's son. Similarly Hecuba *becomes* the mother of Polydorus, as implied when Polydorus identifies himself.

Polydorus uses the verb γίγνομαι to describe his existence. The verb can mean 'to come into being', 'to be born', 'to be', but it also commonly means 'to become'. Polydorus' statement could equally well be translated 'I have *become* (γεγώς) the child of Hecuba, daughter of Cisseus' (*Hec.* 3), drawing metapoetic attention to both genealogical novelties. The force of this expression is paralleled, for example, in Menelaus' tirade against Andromache in *Andromache*. He orders her into the house so that she can learn not to act arrogantly against free citizens, δούλη γεγῶσα 'since [she is] a slave' (*Andr.* 433–4). The participle γεγῶσα indicates that she is *now* a slave, she has *become* a slave. She is not a slave 'by nature', so to speak, but by circumstance.[94] The verb φύω, in its passive forms, captures the sense of 'being by nature'. It can also mean 'to be born', and is commonly used in Euripides' distinctive genealogical prologues by characters who are explaining their own ancestry or that of others.[95] Other verbs used in such genealogies are τίκτω 'to bear',[96] τρέφω 'to rear',[97] and σπείρω 'to beget'.[98] The expression γεγώς, used by Polydorus to refer to his birth in *Hecuba*, appears infrequently in the prologues of extant Euripidean dramas. In the *Children of Heracles* Iolaus explains that he is the kinsman (30: συγγενὴς γεγώς) of the children he defends. There is no reference to ancestry, and Iolaus is

[94] Aristotle famously discusses the relationship between slave and master, which, he claims, is generally positive in the case of 'natural' slavery, but negative in the case of those who have 'been forced' into slavery (*Pol.* 1255^{b}12–16). The nature vs. nurture debate (*physis* vs. *nomos*) was underlined by Lee (1975) 9–16 as a significant theme in *Andromache*; McClure (1999) 170–83 uses this framework for analysing female speech in the play's first *agōn*.

[95] *Her.* 7, *IT* 4–5, *Ion* 3, 50, 70, *Pho.* 8–9, 34, *Or.* 5, 11, 17, 22, *Ba.* 27, 44; on genealogies as distinctive features of Euripidean prologues, see Erbse (1984) 2–6, 73, 223, 250.

[96] *Her.* 2–3, *Ion* 16, 51, 57, *Hel.* 8, *Pho.* 53–5, *Ba.* 2, 42, cf. *Hipp.* 10.

[97] *Supp.* 5, *Ion* 49, *Pho.* 31.

[98] *Ion* 49, 64, *Pho.* 22, *IA* 90.

suitably silent about the precise nature of his kinship with the children, since Euripides has transformed him from the young, athletic, nephew of Heracles, into 'a weak old man of the same generation as Heracles' mother Alcmene (normally his grandmother)'.[99] Iolaus has *become* a kinsman of unspecified relationship to the children, but he is too weak to protect them and will soon beg Demophon to 'become their kinsman' (*Hcld.* 229: γενοῦ δὲ τοῖσδε συγγενής). In the *Bacchae*, Dionysus declares his intention to show Pentheus and all the Thebans that he is a god (*Ba.* 47: θεὸς γεγώς). Here the sense of 'coming into existence' as well as 'being' is latent, since the entire tragedy deals with the introduction of cult worship of Dionysus to Greece. The clearest parallel for Polydorus' expression in *Hecuba*, however, comes from the prologue of *Ion* where Xuthus is described as Αἰόλου δὲ τοῦ Διὸς | γεγὼς Ἀχαιός 'being an Achaean, son of Zeus' son Aeolus' (*Ion* 63–4). This genealogy is a Euripidean innovation, just like that of Polydorus. Xuthus, who is normally the son of Hellen and *brother* of Aeolus, as in Hesiod (*Catalogue of Women* fr. 9 MW) and elsewhere in Euripides (*Wise Melanippe* fr. 481.1–2), has here *become* the son of Aeolus. The purpose of the innovation is to stress that Xuthus is a foreigner who married Creusa in the context of a war.[100] Still the effect of using the term γεγώς is precisely the same as in *Hecuba*, an implicit metapoetic marker underlining a mythological transformation by Euripides.

So, Polydorus' ghost in the prologue of *Hecuba* announces that he has become the son of Hecuba, but his opening lines also cast the play as an intertextual response to Sophocles' *Polyxena*. Several scholars have observed that the ghost's declaration of having come from the hiding place of the dead and the gates of darkness where Hades lives separate from the gods (*Hec.* 1–2) is similar to the opening lines spoken by the ghost of Achilles in *Polyxena* (fr. 523).[101] There too

[99] Allan (2001) 27, who comments further: 'By emphasizing Iolaus' age and presenting him as a defenceless old man, Euripides . . . prepares for the miracle of Iolaus' battlefield rejuvenation.' Allan (2001) 27 n. 26 argues that there is no evidence that Aeschylus handled Iolaus' rejuvenation in his *Children of Heracles*, but Wilkins (1993) xvii suggests, based on Plutarch, *Moralia* 1057e–f, that it may have appeared in Aeschylus. It is tempting to posit a purposeful allusion, but unfortunately our evidence here is too thin.

[100] Lee (1997*a*) *ad* 63–4.

[101] Sutton (1984) 113, Collard (1991) *ad* 1, Bardel (2005) 93–4, Sommerstein (2006*b*) 54, 76.

the ghost has left the black depths of the underworld which is separate from the god Apollo, at least.[102] The ghost of Achilles in *Polyxena* had demanded the sacrifice of Polyxena at his tomb, probably not in the prologue but in a subsequent off-stage epiphany later reported to the audience.[103] Polydorus refers to the demand in the prologue of *Hecuba* announcing that Polyxena will die this very day (*Hec.* 35–44), and elucidates its effect on Hecuba (*Hec.* 45–6): δυοῖν δὲ παίδοιν δύο νεκρὼ κατόψεται | μήτηρ 'my mother will look down on the twin corpses of a pair of her children'. The corpse of Polydorus will also appear to obtain his due burial, which he has so far been denied (*Hec.* 28–9, 46–50). The impact of Euripides' innovation is thus spelled out for the audience. Hecuba's devastation at the loss of her youngest daughter will be paired with the loss of her (newly assigned) youngest son, producing twice the tragedy.

The motif of doubling is developed as the drama progresses. When the chorus report the demand for Polyxena's sacrifice in their *parodos*, they give several significant details. The ghost of Achilles appears above his tomb just as the Greeks are preparing to set sail and prevents them from leaving because of his request (*Hec.* 109–15). Opinion is divided two ways (*Hec.* 117: δίχ') as to what should be done. Agamemnon argues against the sacrifice because of his relationship with Polyxena's sister Cassandra (*Hec.* 120–2), 'but the two sons of Theseus, twin scions of Athens, were orators of double arguments (*dissoi mythoi*), but with a single purpose' (*Hec.* 122–4: τὼ Θησείδα δ', | ὄζω Ἀθηνῶν, διττὼ μύθων | ῥήτορες ἦσαν, γνώμη δὲ μιᾷ). The Theseids, Acamas and Demophon, argue that Cassandra's bed should not be honoured above Achilles' spear (*Hec.* 125–9). The zeal for both sides of the argument was about equal (*Hec.* 130–1) until crafty Odysseus sways the crowd in favour of the sacrifice (*Hec.* 131–40). Ann Michelini observes that the language used to describe the Theseids is unusual. In particular the terms ῥήτορες 'orators' and δισσοὶ μύθοι 'double arguments' are rare in tragedy and, as Michelini shows, their technical sense is used here to associate the council of the Greek army with the sophistic 'double-talk' of the fifth-century

[102] On the meaning of 'without Paeon' as 'unvisited by Apollo' in *Polyxena* fr. 532, see Sommerstein (2006*b*) 76.

[103] Sommerstein (2006*b*) 55, 59.

Athenian assembly.[104] Michelini compares fr. 189 from Euripides' *Antiope*, where a character asserts that someone can create a contest (ἀγῶνα) between two arguments (δισσῶν λόγων) from any matter, provided they are clever at speaking. There, however, the *dissoi logoi*, which create the *agōn*, are clearly two antithetical arguments, just as the so-called sophistic *Dissoi Logoi* treatise is organized in terms of antitheses (DK 2.405–16). What is striking about the *dissoi mythoi* in *Hecuba* is that the arguments are *not* contrary to each other,[105] but rather create a single *gnōmē* 'intention', 'purpose'. If we accept, as I have been arguing, that the term *mythos* can be metapoetically loaded in Euripides, it seems important that the two arguments in *Hecuba* are not *logoi*, but *mythoi*. The expression is, in essence, a *mise en abîme* for this tragedy's plot, which is made up of two distinct *mythoi* (the deaths of Polydorus and Polyxena) brought together for a single purpose (to explore their effect on Hecuba).[106] The notion is paralleled later in the tragedy (*Hec.* 896–7) when Hecuba wishes to cremate 'this pair of siblings' (τώδ' ἀδελφώ), 'their mother's twin anxiety' (δισσὴ μέριμνα μητρί), with a 'single flame' (μιᾷ φλογί). Moreover, describing the speeches of Acamas and Demophon as *mythoi* rather than *logoi*, at the very moment of their introduction in the narrative, draws attention to the novelty of *their* presence and pivotal role in this version of the myth.

It seems reasonably likely that in Sophocles' *Polyxena*, as most commonly in archaic and classical literature and art, Neoptolemus had a major role in orchestrating and performing Polyxena's sacrifice.[107] In Euripides, too, Neoptolemus presides as the priest over the sacrifice (*Hec.* 224, 523–70), but he is notably absent from the debate on the issue and Euripides seems to go out of his way to lay blame for the sacrifice away from Neoptolemus.[108] Euripides does not invent the involvement of Acamas and Demophon in Polyxena's death. They are responsible for Polyxena's slaughter at Achilles' tomb, after saving their grandmother Aethra, in the *Sack of Troy* (Arg. 4, West), and the Ilioupersis cup by the Brygos Painter depicts

[104] Michelini (1987) 143–4. Kovacs (1987) 140 n. 19 also connects the phrase to 'sophistic rhetoric' and 'democracy'.

[105] Emphasized by Gregory (1999) *ad* 123.

[106] Zeitlin (1996) 176 sees that 'the plot seems to consist of two separate and distinct actions, united under the figure of this aged queen'.

[107] See Sommerstein (2006*b*) 42–3, 60–4.

[108] Sommerstein (2010) 268–9.

Acamas leading Polyxena away from Troy as it is sacked.[109] The introduction of Acamas and Demophon as instigators in the assembly, however, seems to be a Euripidean innovation, and it is notable that Odysseus must take over from them to persuade the army (*Hec.* 130–40).[110] Scholars have sought to explain this (largely unexpected) appearance of the sons of Theseus in the assembly. Some have suggested that they symbolize the involvement of Athens in the crime, as a way of reflecting on the misconduct of Athenians during the Peloponnesian War.[111] Mossman suggests that political language is exploited to characterize the Greeks in a more general (and less allegorical) sense.[112] I would argue that the presence of Acamas and Demophon is also a strategy for marking the novel details of Euripides' new drama. As Sommerstein has observed, Neoptolemus' lack of involvement in the debate on the sacrifice is one of several pieces of evidence pointing to the fact that *Hecuba* was produced after *Polyxena*, since Euripides will have avoided reproducing the pattern of Neoptolemus' role in the earlier treatment by Sophocles.[113] Describing the speeches of the Theseids as *mythoi*, then, may also remind an audience that their introduction to the debate of Polyxena's death is itself a *mythos*, a fiction developed by Euripides.

The term *mythos* appears at two further moments of mythological novelty in *Hecuba*. In her appeal to Agamemnon, Hecuba catalogues the multitude of her sufferings. She who was queen is now a slave (*Hec.* 809, 822); she who was blessed with children is now an old and childless woman (*Hec.* 810, 821); she is without city, desolate, the most wretched of mortals (*Hec.* 811, 823). As she tries to convince Agamemnon to assist her in taking vengeance on Polymestor, she says (*Hec.* 835): ἑνός μοι μῦθος ἐνδεὴς ἔτι 'my *mythos* still requires

[109] The Ilioupersis cup is discussed by Mossman (1999) 259.

[110] Persuasive rhetoric is characteristic of Odysseus in this play, see Mossman (1999) 103–18.

[111] King (1985) 63–4 n. 35, Thalmann (1993) 138, C. Segal (1993) 172. For Gregory (1991) 85–120, the imperialist agenda of 5th-cent. Athens is an important reference point for understanding this play.

[112] Mossman (1999) 72, and 41–2.

[113] Other evidence includes the obvious primacy, in theatrical terms, of an appearance by the ghost of Achilles, referred to briefly in *Hecuba* (37–41, 93–5, 109–15), and the apparent assumption in Euripides that the audience knows (without it ever being made explicit) that the ghost of Achilles is making the departure of the fleet impossible as well as demanding the sacrifice. See Sommerstein (2006*b*) 65–6, Bardel (2005) 95, Mossman (1999) 44–7.

one thing'. By using the word *mythos*, Hecuba underlines her list of sufferings as those of traditional mythology. At the same time, it is suggested that her *mythos* is not complete, that her mythological fiction has one additional requirement. Hecuba needs the assistance of Agamemnon in order to effect her revenge (*Hec.* 841–5). In fact, Agamemnon will not actively help Hecuba, but he does remain complicit in passively allowing the revenge to take place (*Hec.* 870–1). The revenge plot is thus further underlined metapoetically as a novel Euripidean addition to Hecuba's story. Moreover, the language Hecuba uses to express her desire for achieving this one further portion of her *mythos* is arrestingly evocative of artistic creation (*Hec.* 836–40): 'If only voice could be produced (*εἴ μοι γένοιτο φθόγγος*) in my arms and hands and hair and in the stepping of my feet, either through the crafts of Daedalus (*Δαιδάλου τέχναισιν*) or of one of the gods, so that they might all take hold of your knees at the same time, weeping, pressing every kind of argument [upon you].'

The image of being able to speak with multiple voices is paralleled in the poet's invocation of the Muses at the opening of the catalogue of ships in *Iliad* 2. There the poet stresses his reliance on the Muses for naming the leaders of the Danaans, for without their help he would be unable to undertake the task, not even if he had ten tongues and ten mouths, and not if he had an unbreakable voice and a heart of bronze (*Il.* 2.488–92). For the poet of the *Iliad*, even the (Daedalic) fantasy of multiple voices would not suffice without the inspiration of the Muses, but the image underscores a desire to speak effectively, as do the multiple speaking body-parts of Hecuba's imagination. By alluding to the crafts of Daedalus as creating this body of many voices, Hecuba likens herself to a work of art, as Mossman has argued.[114] Hecuba had, earlier in this speech, cast herself and her sufferings as a painted subject for Agamemnon's gaze (*Hec.* 807–8), an image which self-consciously suggests 'the mixture of pain and pleasure of the tragic spectacle', as Charles Segal saw.[115] Edith Hall has suggested that Hecuba offers herself as the object of Agamemnon's subjective gaze in this painting metaphor 'in order . . . to assume the role not

[114] Mossman (1999) 128–9 argues persuasively against reading the image as grotesque.

[115] C. Segal (1993) 178. Zeitlin (1996) 186–91 analyses the important theme of vision in *Hecuba*, and highlights Hecuba's effective manipulation of the gaze of others.

only of subject but *agent* in pursuit of Polymestor'.[116] As Hecuba concludes her appeal, she stresses this agency through the second artistic metaphor. She desires to become an automaton,[117] like the statues of Daedalus referred to in Euripides' satyr-play *Eurystheus*, so life-like that they seem to move and see by themselves (fr. 372).[118] Hecuba thus casts herself as an active work of art, capable of agency and creation, rather than the passive object of Agamemnon's vision. In effect, Hecuba expresses a wish to become endowed with fantastical creative skill at the very moment of drawing attention to the new revenge plot.

The status of Polymestor as central to this additional *mythos* is then confirmed in the final use of that term, when he declares in his opening speech that he has come to see Hecuba in response to the 'reports', or 'stories' (*mythoi*) he has heard from her female servant (*Hec.* 966–7), namely the newly invented summons by Hecuba that he should come with his sons to hear a matter related to their mutual needs (*Hec.* 891–4). The passage is pointed because it contradicts his claim, in the very same sentence, to have started out on his own impulse (*Hec.* 965). Kovacs suggested deleting 967,[119] but Gregory argues persuasively that the passage is dramatically appropriate and characteristic of Polymestor's carelessness: 'he advances two equally flattering accounts of his own conduct . . . without noticing the contradiction'.[120] Polymestor's fate in this new mythological episode will create a careful symmetry with Hecuba's, concluding the motif of doubling in this play. Hecuba had begged to be killed alongside Polyxena at Achilles' tomb so that there would be twice the draught of blood (*Hec.* 392), but her plea is rejected. Instead, Talthybius weeps twice for Polyxena (*Hec.* 518), and Hecuba buries the 'twin corpses' (*Hec.* 1287: διπτύχους νεκρούς) of Polyxena and Polydorus, who had been her 'twin anxiety' (*Hec.* 897). Polymestor is

[116] Hall (2006) 134, emphasis is Hall's. Zeitlin (1996) 204–5 observes the contrast between the distancing effect of the painting metaphor, and the power of Hecuba's physical contact with Agamemnon evoked at the end of the speech.

[117] Collard (1991) *ad* 836–40 notes that the scholiast makes the connection between the 'craft of Daedalus' and his speaking automata.

[118] Cf. also Aeschylus, *Theōroi* fr. 78a.6–7 where the chorus of satyrs claim that the images of themselves are such successful likenesses that they rival the creations of Daedalus, and need only a voice (i.e. to be brought to life).

[119] Kovacs (1996*a*) 68.

[120] Gregory (1999) *ad* 967.

symbolically divested of his pair of Thracian lances (*Hec.* 1155–6), and is further incapacitated by being blinded, stumbling out of the tent in a rage as the 'twin bodies' (*Hec.* 1051: διοσσῶν σωμάθ') of his sons are exposed on the *ekkyklēma*.[121] His claim to have been releasing the Achaeans from a 'double toil' (*Hec.* 1197: πόνον . . . διπλοῦν), as Hecuba charges him, by getting rid of Polydorus (and so saving the Greeks from a second attack on Troy, as he had claimed *Hec.* 1138–41), is firmly rebutted when his greed for gold is exposed (*Hec.* 1199–1232).[122] Rather Polymestor is the one who ends up consigned not just to one perpetual grief, but to two, in being without his (two) children and without his (two) eyes, which he laments simultaneously (*Hec.* 1255).

The *Hecuba* announces itself as a metapoetic rival to Sophocles' *Polyxena* in various ways. Euripides' Polyxena, for example, is unwavering in her acceptance of death and defiantly exposes herself to the sacrificial sword (*Hec.* 342–78, 546–65), whereas Sophocles' Polyxena had probably pleaded with Neoptolemus to spare her life.[123] Most important, however, is the twofold nature of Euripides' plot, and the fact that the entire play is framed in relation to the newly invented portion of that plot, beginning with the ghost of Polydorus and ending with the revenge on Polymestor. Hecuba successfully effects her revenge in this tragedy, but the articulation of a savage desire to avenge herself on those who have killed her children is also an epic paradigm. In the last book of the *Iliad* (24.212–14) Hecuba wishes she could eat the liver of Achilles in revenge for his slaying of Hector. Mossman observes that this gruesome expression is unparalleled in Homer.[124] In this respect, as in others, from the new genealogies to the involvement of Acamas and Demophon, Euripidean innovation appeals to epic authority, as we have seen. Hecuba's involvement in sparing Odysseus' life at Troy when he is discovered on a spying mission (*Hec.* 239–48), an episode which features *only*

[121] Although it is important, the murder of two children is not the only reciprocal element in Hecuba's revenge on Polymestor. Zeitlin (1996) 194–200 elucidates many more significant motifs from bleeding eyes to the manipulation of robes; on imagery of clothing, see also C. Segal (1993) 159–69.

[122] C. Segal (1993) 158–61 shows that the motif of gold in this play is negatively linked with 'the wrangling of the meaner survivors' (159) in contrast to the heroic past.

[123] Sommerstein (2006*b*) 60–3 with 43–4.

[124] Mossman (1999) 37. Even the myth of Prometheus is less shocking, since the vulture who eats his liver is a recognizably savage creature.

Helen in Homer (*Od.* 4.244–58), is also an example of epic appropriation and transference with a serious dramatic agenda. Hecuba's complicity in Odysseus' earlier salvation casts his own callous disregard for her supplication into sharp and provocative relief.[125] In its details, and through its double plot and the associated motif of doubling, even more pervasive in *Hecuba* than in *Andromache*, this tragedy too is cast metapoetically as reinvigorating epic paradigms while rivalling an earlier tragedy.

NEW MUSINGS: *TROJAN WOMEN* AND THE TROJAN TRILOGY

Euripides returned to the sufferings of Hecuba in the first and third plays of his so-called Trojan Trilogy. This is our only example of a tragic trilogy by Euripides that dramatizes a consecutive sequence of related mythological events. The first two plays are fragmentary but it seems clear that the trilogy was not as tightly bound together as the connected trilogies of Aeschylus. Nevertheless, Euripidean trilogies *did* have important thematic connections, even when the mythological events they dramatized belonged to entirely separate sagas. His tragic trilogy of 431, for example, comprising *Medea*, *Philoctetes*, and *Dictys*, dealt with displaced or rejected characters in each play (and possibly the challenges of being foreign).[126] All three dramas are closely linked with the sea in various ways, and none of the plays seem to have featured gods on stage (which is relatively unusual in Euripides).[127] Euripides' last tragic trilogy — *Iphigenia in Aulis*, *Alcmaeon in Corinth*, *Bacchae* — focuses on 'family tragedy based on misrecognitions and deception'.[128] In both these trilogies, there is tighter connection between the first and last plays. Children are of central importance in *Medea* and *Dictys*,[129] while *Iphigenia in Aulis*

[125] Mossman (1999) 104–18 gives a detailed analysis of Hecuba's supplication of Odysseus and of his response. C. Segal (1993) 217 notes that Odysseus privileges martial honour over mention of the gods in his arguments.

[126] Mossman (2011) 13 with n. 48; C. Müller (1997) 33 compares Medea and Philoctetes as victims of betrayal in an antithetical relationship to one another, Medea becoming an avenger while Philoctetes remains a helpless victim.

[127] Mossman (2011) 13. [128] Michelakis (2006) 87.

[129] Mossman (2011) 13.

and *Bacchae* both culminate in the death of a young person, killed by a parent, in a perversion of normal ritual sacrifice.[130] In the case of the Trojan trilogy there is a stronger case than usual for thematic as well as mythological consistency between the plays, as will become apparent in the following discussion, though here too there is a clearer dialogue between the first and third plays linked by the figure of Hecuba. I argue that *Trojan Women* is presented in remarkable, and apparently paradoxical, metapoetic terms, but that the drama's structure and some key fragments from the first two plays of the trilogy (*Alexandros* and *Palamedes*) help to contextualize and make sense of *Trojan Women*'s metapoetic agenda. The tragedy is cast as a 'new' version of epic events through the trigger word *kainos*, but actually repeats well-known and predictable events from the sacking of Troy. Unlike most other Euripidean tragedies, the novelty of *Trojan Women* lies not in the events themselves, but in the drama's perspective that sufferings can function as a muse, and in the sense that history repeats itself in a destructive and cyclical fashion.

In a well-known passage from *Trojan Women*, the chorus of newly captive Trojan women begin their first *stasimon* with an appeal to the Muse (*Tro.* 511–15): *ἀμφί μοι Ἴλιον, ὦ | Μοῦσα, καινῶν ὕμνων | ᾆσον σὺν δακρύοις ᾠδὰν ἐπικήδειον· | νῦν γὰρ μέλος ἐς Τροίαν ἰαχήσω* 'About Ilium, O Muse, sing for me a funereal ode of new songs (*hymnoi*) accompanied with tears; for now I will cry forth a tune regarding Troy.' The song continues with a description of the treacherous wooden horse welcomed by the Trojans to their ruin (*Tro.* 516–67). The appeal to the Muse 'is unique in the lyrics of tragedy' and evokes epic models as Kevin Lee well observed, and he also saw that the song is 'new' in the sense that it is 'a song of woe' rather than one of joy.[131] Neil Croally, following Shirley Barlow, notes that the song differs from epic 'because it is seen almost entirely through the eyes of women'.[132] Matthew Wright suggests that the 'new songs' may have

[130] Sommerstein (2012*a*) shows that the seemingly unconnected Persian War trilogy of Aeschylus (*Phineus*, *Persians*, *Glaucus of Potniae*) does also, in fact, have a strong thematic focus on the events of the Persian War, though here too the first and third plays are more clearly bound together in presenting mythological rather than historically based material.

[131] Lee (1997*b*) *ad* 511–14; Davidson (2001) 65 notes several example of epic 'flavour' in the first *stasimon*.

[132] Croally (1994) 245, Barlow (1986) *ad* 511 ff. Davidson (2000) 127–8 and (2001) 77–8 takes issue with this position, but stressing the fact that Trojan women also

been composed in the 'new' musical style Euripides was known for exploring.[133] These comments are insightful, but it is surprising that commentators do not seem to have noticed the specific intertextual model evoked by this *stasimon*, namely the song of Demodocus in *Odyssey* 8 (426–534).[134] Demodocus sings of the wooden horse, too, and his song is announced as a *hymnos* (8.429), a striking term in the epic context because this is the only instance of the word in Homer.[135] Greek has many words for 'song'. The first *stasimon* of *Trojan Women* uses several—*hymnos* (512), *ōidē* (514), *melos* (515, 545), *aoidē* (529), *boē* (547); but there are more used elsewhere in this play, such as *kelados* (1072, cf. 121), *molpē* (147), *mousa* (120, 609) *paiān* (126, 578), and there is also *thrēnos* (609, cf. 111, 684) 'lament'. It seems no accident that, of all these available terms, *hymnos* is chosen to describe the new version of the *only hymnos* in Homer. Moreover, the song of Demodocus, like the new *hymnoi* of the Trojan women, is accompanied with tears, the tears of Odysseus as he weeps on hearing the story. The simile used to describe Odysseus' weeping is arguably more famous than the subject of the bard's song. I quote Richmond Lattimore's sensitive translation (*Od.* 8.523–32):

> As a woman weeps, lying over the body
> of her dear husband, who fell fighting for her city and people
> as he tried to beat off the pitiless day from city and children;
> she sees him dying and gasping for breath, and winding her body
> about him she cries high and shrill, while the men behind her,
> hitting her with their spear butts on the back and the shoulders,
> force her up and lead her away into slavery, to have
> hard work and sorrow, and her cheeks are wracked with pitiful weeping.
> Such were the pitiful tears Odysseus shed from under
> his brows.

lament in Homer misses the point that the *content* of the song has to do specifically with the Greek victory over Troy.

[133] Wright (2010) 179 n. 78. Kranz (1933) 228, 254 also made this connection, though Csapo (2000) rightly challenges the position of Kranz and others, who suggested an apparently exclusive association of Euripidean 'new music' with his 'dithyrambic' *stasima* deemed detachable from (and potentially irrelevant to) their respective tragedies.

[134] The lack of focus on the song's content in Davidson (2000) means that, although he adduces the figure of Demodocus as a parallel (128), remarkably, he fails to make the connection between the subject of Demodocus' song and that of Euripides' Trojan women.

[135] Garvie (1994) *ad* 8.429.

Although his own success in sacking Troy has just been described, Odysseus weeps like one of its female victims. Jasper Griffin suggests that, now alone and destitute, 'through the medium of song he learns to sympathise with suffering, to feel it as his own'.[136] Alex Garvie also stresses the element of identification Odysseus experiences with his own victims here.[137] Certainly, as wives of the fallen Trojan men (*Tro.* 143–4, 1081 1307–9), the chorus of Trojan women in Euripides' play are actualizations of the women evoked in the Homeric simile, as are Hecuba and Andromache. In the context of the *Odyssey*, Gregory Nagy felt that the situation of Andromache was specifically evoked by the simile.[138] In *Trojan Women*, an intertextual connection to the *Odyssey* is strengthened by the fact that Cassandra has essentially given a remarkably specific summary of the *Odyssey* in the previous scene (*Tro.* 431–43): Odysseus will reach his homeland alone after an additional ten years of suffering (*Tro.* 433–4), having experienced Charybdis (*Tro.* 436, cf. *Od.* 12), the flesh-eating Cyclops (*Tro.* 436–7, cf. *Od.* 9), Circe who turns men into swine (*Tro.* 437–8, cf. *Od.* 10), shipwreck (*Tro.* 438, cf. *Od.* 5), desire for the lotus plant (*Tro.* 439, cf. *Od.* 9), and the sacred cattle of the Sun who will emit ominous sounds (*Tro.* 439–41, cf. *Od.* 12). Self-conscious attention is drawn to the elaborate nature of this summary when Cassandra checks herself at this point, declaring that she will abridge the remainder of the story (*Tro.* 441: *ὡς δὲ συντέμω*), and concludes by saying that Odysseus will go down alive to Hades (*Tro.* 442, cf. *Od.* 11) and, when he has escaped the sea, he will find countless troubles in his house (*Tro.* 442–3, cf. *Od.* 13–24). On multiple levels then, the first *stasimon* is framed in relation to the *Odyssey*. The song of the chorus is 'new' in relation to that of Demodocus because it is *told* from the point of view of the victims rather than the victors. It forces the audience to identify with the victims on their own terms, and not through the grief of a mediating character from the victorious camp. Nevertheless, the intertext fits the trend of Euripides' engagement with epic that we have been tracing, since it develops an existing Homeric model by acknowledging, and focusing on, the sufferings of the women of Troy

[136] Griffin (1987) 57.

[137] Garvie (1994) 339. Pucci (1987) 222 discusses how Odysseus is both the 'doer' and 'reader' in this episode since the narrative of the sack of Troy, in which he participates, is transposed 'into a rhetorical mode that describes him as a listener'.

[138] Nagy (1979) 101.

whose lives were devastated by the wooden horse and the soldiers inside.

In fact, the term *kainos*, meaning 'new', with the strong implication of 'newly invented', 'novel' (as distinct from *neos* 'new', 'young', for example), is another important metapoetic marker in Euripidean drama, used to underline novelties throughout his oeuvre. Isolated examples have been noticed by scholars, as acknowledged in the following discussion, but the phenomenon is far more pervasive than has been recognized. In *Hecuba*, when Hecuba recognizes the body of Polydorus, she exclaims in horror 'I look upon things unbelievable and new, unbelievable and new!' (*Hec.* 689: ἄπιστ' ἄπιστα, καινὰ καινὰ δέρκομαι). This emphasis on novelty dovetails clearly with other metapoetic strategies deployed by Euripides to highlight his innovation concerning the death of Polydorus, which we discussed above. It also mirrors the perspective of the spectators who are themselves seeing unbelievable (fictional) and novel things in the performance. The impact is especially striking since Hecuba has been told, just twenty lines earlier, that she is now without child, without husband, and without city (*Hec.* 669), to which she had responded 'you tell me nothing new' (*Hec.* 670: οὐ καινὸν εἶπας). She had assumed the servant was referring to the loss of Polyxena in calling her childless, but just when Hecuba thinks no new grief is possible, she is presented with the devastating discovery that Polydorus too has been murdered.[139] It is appropriate then that the novelty of her reciprocal revenge on Polymestor is also marked when her actions are called 'new evils' (*Hec.* 1038: καίν' . . . κακά).[140]

In Euripides' *Suppliants*, Theseus draws attention to the novel role of his mother Aethra in the play,[141] when he refers to her presence at the altar in Eleusis as 'new intrusions of stories' (*Supp.* 92: καινὰς ἐσβολάς . . . λόγων), in a phrase that has seemingly challenged commentators who have not seen its metapoetic agenda.[142] Theseus later describes himself with the unusual phrase καινὸς ἐν καινῷ δορί 'a

[139] McDermott (1991) 130–1 also discusses these passages, noting that Hecuba's servant adds to the tension by referring in anticipation to Hecuba's 'new griefs' (*Hec.* 675: νέων δὲ πημάτων), which are 'unexpected' (*Hec.* 680: πάρ' ἐλπίδας).

[140] McDermott (1991) 131 calls this a 'covert reference to mythic innovation'.

[141] Collard (1975) 5 n. 11 observes that 'Aethra's role is Euripides' invention'.

[142] Morwood (2007) 47 translates 'things that are strange to talk of' (following Collard (1975) *ad* 92), commenting *ad* 92 that the phrase literally means 'strange occasions-for-my-beginning of words'. Translating ἐσβολάς as 'occasions-for-my-

new man on a new military campaign' (*Supp.* 593). This occurs when he decides that attacking Thebes with a military force is a necessity, which, as we saw in Chapter 3, is highlighted metapoetically in several ways as a radical departure from the events of Aeschylus' *Eleusinians*.[143] A similar example of *polyptoton* is found in *Ion*, where Ion explains that he greets each new set of visitors to Delphi as 'a new face among new faces' (*Ion* 641: καινὸς ἐν καινοῖσιν). As Lee observes, this is exactly what we have seen Ion doing in the play, first with the chorus, then with Creusa, and finally with Xuthus.[144] This novelty, then, is a kind of *mise en abîme*, a momentary reflection in miniature on the structure of the drama up to that point, but there may well have been a point of contact with Sophocles' lost *Ion* (or *Creusa*).[145] The end of *Orestes* contains a comparable expression after the apparent murder of Helen, which we know to be a mythological novelty. As we observed in Chapter 1, the chorus comment metapoetically on the fact that 'this novelty takes the place of other novelties' (*Or.* 1503: ἀμείβει καινὸν ἐκ καινῶν τόδε).[146] Two specific events are also underlined as novel in *Orestes*. When Orestes says to Electra 'you will tell me something novel' (*Or.* 239: λέξεις τι καινόν), Electra tells him that Menelaus has arrived (*Or.* 241), marking this drama's addition of Menelaus to the aftermath of Orestes' matricide. The arrival of Menelaus had been predicted at the end of Euripides' *Electra* (1278–80) but the episode does not seem to have been represented on stage before *Orestes*. The trial of Orestes in Argos is similarly identified as novel in metapoetic terms. The Messenger describes the crowd gathering at the place where it was said that Danaus first prosecuted Aegyptus (*Or.* 871–3). This provides a context for legitimizing Euripides' innovation of putting Orestes on trial in Argos, as Willink remarks.[147] But the novelty is emphasized further when the

beginning' seems an unnecessarily complicated construing of the meaning 'introduction' or 'intrusion' which makes clear sense in marking the dramatic innovation.

[143] Also noticed by McDermott (1991) 125–7.

[144] Lee (1997*a*) *ad* 640–1.

[145] Ion's statement, a few lines before referring to himself as *kainos*, that no wicked man ever pushed him off the road (*Ion* 635–6) sounds suspiciously like a negation of some incident known from a previous version, very much like the statement of Orestes in *Andromache*, discussed above, that he has not come in response to Hermione's messages. Sophocles' *Ion* and *Creusa* may have been one and the same play (see Lloyd-Jones (2003) 178, 188).

[146] Cf. McDermott (1991) 131–2.

[147] Willink (1986) *ad* 871–3.

messenger claims to have asked one of the Argives 'what's new in Argos?' (*Or.* 875: *τί καινὸν Ἄργει*), a question which leads directly into the description of Orestes' trial.

There are many more examples. Euripides' *Medea* contains the most occurrences of the word *kainos*. Medea's statement, in her opening speech, that a wife must learn how best to deal with the 'new customs' (*kaina ēthē*) of her husband's house (*Med.* 238–40), and her reference, in the exchange with Creon, to the 'novel cleverness' (*Med.* 298: *kaina sopha*) of which she is clearly capable, draw metapoetic attention to the novelty of her character's strategies for manipulation in this play. Her duplicitous request of forgiveness from Jason is underlined as a specific example with the indication that it is something *kainon* (*Med.* 868). Jason's marriage to the princess is emphatically called *kainos* (*Med.* 76, 155, 489, 556) and Medea sarcastically suggests that Jason must believe in 'novel rites' (*Med.* 494: *kaina thesmia*) since he has broken his divinely sanctioned oath of loyalty to her. Medea's banishment is *kainos* (*Med.* 270, 705), and the murders of Creon and the princess are announced as *kainos* (*Med.* 1120). All these events are likely Euripidean innovations to this mythological episode. It is difficult to say with absolute certainty exactly which elements of Euripides' *Medea* were new, but the combination of a setting at Corinth with Medea and Jason as exiles from Iolcus, and Jason's abandonment of Medea for the princess seems to be a Euripidean innovation.

According to the epic poet Eumelus, Medea was herself queen of Corinth, because the kingdom had originally belonged to her father Aeetes and was to be restored to him or to his descendant, should they return to Greece (fr. 17, West). In this account, Jason became king of Corinth because he was *Medea's* husband (fr. 23, West). The scholium on *Medea* 9 (= 19) states that both Eumelus (cf. fr. 20, West) and the lyric poet Simonides (cf. *PMG* 545) name Medea as queen of Corinth. The threat of banishment, then, by the regent Creon, is likely to have been new in this context. Von Fritz discusses the possibility of a pre-Euripidean version in which Medea killed Creon and fled for fear of the Corinthians' revenge,[148] but it seems likely, at the very least, that the manner of Creon's death in Euripides was an innovation.[149] The manner of Dirce's death in Euripides' *Antiope*,

[148] Von Fritz (1962) 330.

[149] Euripides would have imported the motif from elsewhere; a poisoned robe features in Sophocles' *Women of Trachis*, for example.

dismembered while being dragged by a bull, is similarly marked as *kainos* (fr. 223. 61–2) and could have been an innovation. Mastronarde mentions Jason's betrayal and remarriage and the means of effecting the murder of Creon and the princess as two possible innovations, cautioning that these elements 'could have occurred earlier as well',[150] but the exploitation of the term *kainos* is suggestive. Indeed, it is striking that the murder of the children by Medea is *not* called *kainos*. Many scholars, myself included, and most recently Mossman,[151] have assumed that this was probably a Euripidean innovation, but Mastronarde outlines various problems, and demonstrates that, although possible, this is far from certain.[152] He observes, among other things, that the Nurse's fears for the children (*Med.* 36, 90–5, 100–18) may well depend for their effectiveness on the audience's awareness of a version where they were killed, whether by Medea or by someone else. If I am right about Euripides' metapoetic use of the term *kainos* in his tragedies, the implication is that the filicide was *not* a novel element in the plot. Rather the major innovations were Jason's betrayal and remarriage and Medea's terrifyingly powerful mind.

In *Heracles*, the term *kainos* is used repeatedly and obviously to designate the 'new' usurping king Lycus, who is 'new' precisely because he has been invented by Euripides (*Her.* 38, 541, 567, 768; cf. 530 where the situation is 'new').[153] When Heracles comes out of his madness, bewildered, he says to Amphitryon 'tell me if you are inscribing (*hupographēi*) something new (*ti kainon*) for my life' (*Her.* 1118). As Amphitryon prepares for Heracles' realization that he has murdered his family, the novelty of the sequence of events seems to be underlined. The verb *hupographō*, which means 'to add to an inscription by writing something underneath it', metapoetically evokes the motif of writing discussed in the last chapter. We know that Euripides innovated by placing Heracles' murders *after* his labours.[154] Combining vocabulary of writing *as an addendum* with vocabulary of novelty, at the moment Heracles is about to realize his crimes, reflects the innovation of placing the madness as an addendum to the labours

[150] Mastronarde (2002) 56.
[151] Torrance (2010*b*) 125 with 133 n. 3, Mossman (2011) 8.
[152] Mastronarde (2002) 52–3.
[153] Bond (1981) xxviii notes that *kainos* at *Her.* 38 'points clearly to Euripidean invention'.
[154] Bond (1981) xxviii–xxx.

(cf. *Her.* 1177, where Theseus calls the crime scene a *kainon . . . kakon* 'novel evil').

In *Iphigenia among the Taurians*, several moments of novelty are marked as *kainos*. Iphigenia's bizarre dreams (discussed in Chapter 2) are 'novel apparitions' (*IT* 42: καινὰ . . . φάσματα); the presence of Orestes and Pylades is reported in 'novel proclamations' (*IT* 239: καινῶν . . . κηρυγμάτων); Iphigenia's plan to exploit Orestes' matricide in order to dupe the king convincingly is 'a novel discovery' (*IT* 1029: καινὸν ἐξεύρημά τι); the attempted escape of the siblings and Pylades by ship is appropriately reported as 'a cargo of novel woes' (*IT* 1306: καινῶν φόρτον . . . κακῶν). Similarly in *Helen* the escape of Helen and Menelaus, successful in this case, is reported as 'novel calamities' (*IT* 1513: καίν' . . . πήματ') for the Egyptians. Earlier in that play, Helen had addressed both Theoclymenus and Menelaus with the cleverly ambiguous phrase 'O new husband of mine' (*Hel.* 1399: ὦ καινὸς ἡμῖν πόσις). Ostensibly, she is addressing Theoclymenus, who believes that she will marry him after she has performed a (bogus) funeral ritual for Menelaus. It is really Menelaus himself, however, who qualifies appropriately as the 'new husband' (since he has been recently reunited with the real Helen), as opposed to being her 'former husband' in the *Iliad* (e.g. 3.163, 3.429). Moreover, Helen has just set eyes on Menelaus as a newly gleaming warrior, transformed, thanks to a change of costume, from the filthy beggar of earlier scenes. While we are on the subject of 'new' spouses, it seems likely that Euripides invented the rescue of Alcestis from the Underworld in his *Alcestis*, in order to set his play apart from the *Alcestis* of Phrynichus, who had probably introduced the figures of Death and Heracles to the myth.[155] The restoration of Alcestis to Admetus at the end of the play is fraught with tension since Admetus, who had vowed never to take another wife (*Alc.* 328–37), eventually accepts the 'new' wife given to him by Heracles without knowing her identity.[156] This novel ending seems

[155] L. Parker (2007) xiv–xvi, Dale (1954) xv.

[156] Admetus' acceptance of this 'new' wife has been analysed by scholars in terms of the pressures of hospitality exerted on him by Heracles (e.g. Burnett (1965) 250–4, Dyson (1988) 22–3, C. Segal (1993) 80–6). Lloyd (1985) 128–9 emphasizes Heracles' tricking of Admetus, and L. Parker (2007) 253 draws attention to Admetus' gradual loss of control in the final scene as Heracles weakens his resolve. Gregory (1979) 268 argued that the ending 'transcends judgments of character' since the restoration of Alcestis to Admetus destabilizes her act of self-sacrifice.

anticipated by the chorus, when they raise the possibility of Admetus taking a 'new marriage bed' (*Alc.* 464: καινὸν . . . λέχος).

In Euripides' *Electra*, Aegisthus is referred to as 'the new lord of the Mycenaeans' (*El.* 776: ὁ καινὸς τῶν Μυκηναίων ἄναξ), just as his mythologically novel actions are described: he is happily sacrificing to the Nymphs in the idyllic location where he is murdered.[157] In *Hippolytus*, Phaedra's discovery that the Nurse has revealed her secret leads her to proclaim that she needs 'new plans' (*Hipp.* 688: καινῶν λόγων); these plans will include her suicide and letter of accusation (cf. Ch. 3). The *IA* draws more direct attention to the novelty of a letter when the Old Man asks Agamemnon, who is carrying a letter, 'what novelty are you contriving?' (*IA* 2: τί δὲ καινουργεῖς;). The novel letter threatens to derail traditional mythology by preventing Iphigenia's arrival at Aulis. Later in the play when Achilles, shocked at Clytemnestra's assumption that he is to marry Iphigenia, wonders whether she has gone mad and is contriving a novel story (*IA* 838: παρανοοῦσα καινουργεῖς λόγον), the intertextual echo reminds us that Agamemnon was the one who had attempted to contrive a novel story with his letter ordering Clytemnestra not to come to Aulis. Finally, Euripides' *Bacchae*, which is all about the introduction of the new god Dionysus, contains two metapoetic references to novel introduction. Both are made by Pentheus, who opposes and suspects the new rites most vehemently. He says that Dionysus 'introduces a novel plague' (*Ba.* 353–4: ἐσφέρει νόσον | καινήν) and challenges the god (of drama!) directly, saying 'you are always introducing novel stories' (*Ba.* 650: τοὺς λόγους γὰρ ἐσφέρεις καινοὺς ἀεί).

It seems clear, then, that the *kainoi hymnoi* in *Trojan Women* are metapoetically loaded in proclaiming a new version of the song of Demodocus about the wooden horse and the destruction of Troy. The story has already been mentioned by Poseidon in the prologue (*Tro.* 8–12), who related how the horse was made by Epeius with the assistance of Athena (*Tro.* 10–12). These are the same details given in the song of Demodocus about the construction of the wooden

[157] Cropp (1988) 154 notes that Aegisthus' death is associated with a sanctuary in one 6th-cent. metope, but the dénouement of the murder in Euripides is certainly novel compared with his murder in the palace presented in Aeschylus (*Libation Bearers*) and Sophocles (*Electra*). Indeed, we discussed in Ch. 1 how Euripides self-consciously relocates the events of his *Electra* in relation to Aeschylus' *Oresteia*.

horse (*Od.* 8.493), and in the *Little Iliad* (Arg. 4, West).[158] The epic context of the wooden horse story is thus emphasized from the opening of the drama, and prepares us for the evocation of the song of Demodocus in the first *stasimon*. As the chorus dance and sing of the Trojans foolishly celebrating the 'mountain pine, polished ambush of Argives' (*Tro.* 533–4), which they brought inside their city, their desperate situation is palpable. The act of singing and dancing against the background of a smoking Troy, while describing the dances and songs of jubilation in which they had participated while Troy stood firm (esp. *Tro.* 544–55), creates the kind of terrible tension that characterizes this tragedy. When the chorus women reproach Zeus for betraying his temple at Troy in the third *stasimon*, they comment that the sacrifices held in his honour are now gone as are 'the auspicious songs of choruses' (*Tro.* 1071–2: χορῶν τ' | εὔφαμοι κέλαδοι). Again, there is an excruciating irony here: the chorus women sing of the *absence* of choruses while they are themselves in the middle of a choral performance. Euripides takes this kind of irony to a ridiculous extreme more suited to satyr-drama in his *Cyclops*, as discussed below, but in *Trojan Women* the irony seems tied up with the tragedy's awful atmosphere of suspended animation at the moment of transition from nobility to slavery, and in the tragedy's metapoetic suggestion that sufferings are an appropriate subject for poetic performance.

Trojan Women is arguably Euripides' most relentlessly depressing drama. The suffering of the Greeks is predicted (*Tro.* 65–6, 73–86, 431–43, 460–1), but there is no triumphant moment of revenge for the women of Troy, as in *Hecuba*, nor any salvation as in *Andromache*. Even Hecuba's masterful condemnation of Helen will have no effect in the end, since we know that Menelaus will not punish Helen on their return to Greece.[159] The Trojan women suffer one calamity after

[158] Cf. also Asius fr. 5, West. Odysseus refers to Epeius' manufacture of the horse in the Underworld, but with no mention of Athena (*Od.* 11.523–4). Euripides' lost satyr-drama *Epeius* must have dealt with the construction of the horse, a topic ideally suited to this genre's focus on novel inventions.

[159] I cannot agree with Lloyd (1984) 303–4, who argues that we have no reason to believe that Helen will escape punishment and that (304) 'we are not entitled to make use of our knowledge of the story if nothing is made of it in the play'. The entire drama invites the use of external knowledge to fill in the blanks, and Easterling (1997*b*) 175 is surely correct that familiar scenes from *Odyssey* 4 'of Menelaus and Helen happily settled back home' will have surfaced in the minds of a 5th-cent. Greek audience.

another, but these are all horribly familiar, and, in spite of the 'new songs' of the chorus, we are left with the feeling that nothing 'new' really happens at all in this play. And yet this tragedy contains more examples of the word *kainos* than any other extant play by Euripides, with the exception of *Medea* (discussed above). The report that Cassandra has been assigned to Agamemnon (*Tro.* 249) as we know from Aeschylus' *Agamemnon*, that Polyxena will 'serve at the tomb of Achilles' (*Tro.* 264) as in Sophocles' *Polyxena* and Euripides' *Hecuba*, that Andromache will be concubine to Neoptolemus (*Tro.* 274) as dramatized in Euripides' *Andromache*, and that Hecuba will be slave to Odysseus (*Tro.* 278), is announced as a *kainos logos* (*Tro.* 238). All of these events are well known from earlier poetry, with the exception of Hecuba being assigned to Odysseus as a slave, for which there is no source earlier than Euripides. It is impossible to say whether Euripides invented this, or whether this version was attested in the Cyclic epics. Certainly Hecuba's predicted enslavement to Odysseus proves abortive, and later sources record her metamorphosis and/or death in a variety of ways.[160] In this list of well-known events, it seems unlikely that the prediction was invented and, in any case, the earlier *Hecuba* had presented Hecuba as a slave at the mercy of Odysseus. Similarly, the famous hurling of Astyanax from the walls of Troy (*Andr.* 10, *Little Iliad* frr. 18, 19, West) is a pronouncement of *kaina bouleumata* 'new plans' (708), it represents 'new [woes] after new [woes]' (*Tro.* 1118: καίν' <ἐκ> καινῶν), and is a 'novel murder' (*Tro.* 1159–60: φόνον | καινόν). Neoptolemus sails off early with Andromache because he hears that Peleus has suffered 'some new misfortunes' (*Tro.* 1126–7: καινάς τινας | . . . συμφοράς) in being driven out by Pelias' son Acastus (*Tro.* 1126–8), events dramatized in Sophocles' *Peleus*. Andromache's psychological struggle with her 'new marriage bed' (*Tro.* 668: καινοῖσι λέκτροις) is distinctly reminiscent of the title character of Euripides' earlier *Andromache*, as she wrestles with the need to adapt to life with her new master while adamantly refusing to forget Hector (*Tro.* 657–88). These 'novelties', then, are new experiences for the characters, to be sure, but they are not at all new or novel in poetic terms.[161]

[160] See Gantz (1993) 661.

[161] *Tro.* 959–60, where Helen refers to Deiphobus as her *kainos posis* 'new husband' after the death of Paris, are excised by Diggle (1981), Barlow (1986), Biehl (1989), and Kovacs (1999) following Wilamowitz. Lee (1997*b*) *ad* 959–60 suggests that the reference makes sense in the context of *Alexandros*, which featured a bitter rivalry between the two men. Cf. Parmentier (1948) 5 and 67 n. 4, and Scodel (1980)

In light of the overwhelming evidence, gathered above, that Euripides uses the term *kainos* to underline novelties metapoetically, *Trojan Women* is unique. It insists throughout that old poetic events are 'new' experiences with at least one specifically discernible metapoetic disclaimer, namely that the first *stasimon* is a new version of the song of Demodocus. Importantly, in this case, as in all the other 'novel' events of the play, it is not the *subject* of the song that is new; it is the *perspective*. Athena's attitude in the prologue serves as a programmatic model for this particular metapoetic agenda. When Poseidon asks Athena if she has a *kainon epos* 'a new message' to relate (*Tro.* 55), she answers 'No, I have arrived at your powerful side . . . for the sake of Troy, so that I may take it as a partner' (*Tro.* 57–8: *οὔκ, ἀλλὰ Τροίας οὕνεκ', . . . | πρὸς σὴν ἀφῖγμαι δύναμιν, ὡς κοινὴν λάβω*). So the *epos* is not new, an interesting choice of word, since the plural *epea* regularly means 'epic poetry',[162] but the sentiment expressed by Athena is startlingly new. Athena's anger at the Greeks for their crimes in her Trojan temples was well known. She was especially vexed by Ajax's seizure of Cassandra in her temple, and she subsequently refers to this crime (*Tro.* 69–71), but her motivation, as she explains it, is marked *first* by sympathy with Troy and only secondly by hatred of the Greeks. She comes *for Troy's sake*, and she wants to take Troy *as a partner*. This is clear from Poseidon's response, which underlines the surprising nature of Athena's statement: 'Surely you have not come to pity her [i.e. Troy] in some way, and cast aside your former enmity, now that she has been burned to ashes with fire?' (*Tro.* 59–60: *οὔ που νιν, ἔχθραν τὴν πρὶν ἐκβαλοῦσα, νῦν | ἐς οἶκτον ἦλθες πυρὶ κατηθαλωμένην;*). Athena evades the question, asking Poseidon to confirm his alliance with her (*Tro.* 61–2), but later states that she wishes 'to gladden' the Trojans (*Tro.* 65: *εὐφρᾶναι*). So we are left with the understanding that Athena, who contrived the destruction of Troy, by devising the Trojan horse as we have just been told (*Tro.* 10–12), now *sympathizes* with the Trojan victims.[163]

143, who agrees. In any case Helen's marriage to Deiphobus is not 'new' in literary terms either, but is known from the *Little Iliad* (Arg. 2, West; cf. the *Sack of Troy* Arg. 2, West).

[162] e.g. Pindar, *Nemean* 2.2 (of the epics of the Homeridae), Herodotus 2.117 (of Homeric epic and the *Cypria*), Plato, *Republic* 379a (of epic as distinguished from lyric and tragic poetry).

[163] *Pace* Konstan (2001) 108–9, who briefly dismisses the possibility that Athena pities the Trojans, but does not examine the passage or broader context in any detail.

It is not in itself remarkable that the Trojan women are sympathetic characters in this play, because Trojans are more or less always sympathetic in Euripides, and indeed in Greek literature more generally.[164] Still, it is true that the Trojans bear some inherited responsibility in precipitating the devastating war. Euripides alters the Homeric genealogy of Ganymede, who is the son of Tros in the *Iliad* (5.265–6, 20.231–2), and follows the *Little Iliad* (fr. 6, West) instead, making Ganymede the son of Laomedon (*Tro.* 820–4), the problematic Trojan ancestor who cheated Apollo and Poseidon out of their agreed wage for building the walls of Troy. Burnett observes that this genealogical shift links the Trojans inextricably with offences against the gods.[165] Nevertheless, what *is* remarkable in *Trojan Women* is the relentless and almost exclusive focus on the grief of the female Trojan survivors, a grief caused specifically by the inevitabilities of war (as opposed to Polydorus' murder in *Hecuba*, for example).[166] *Trojan Women* forces the audience to relive old events anew, one after another, through the sufferings of its victims, a pattern forcefully concluded by presenting two stages in the burning of Troy, one at the beginning, and one at the end of the drama. Throughout the play, references are made to the recent burning of Troy, which is still smouldering (*Tro.* 8, 60, 145, 586, 1080). It would have been easy to create smoke rising from behind the *skēnē* building to represent this in a performance, and Lee observes that Poseidon's use of the present tense καπνοῦται 'smouldering' (*Tro.* 8) 'shows that the city was still

[164] See Hall (1989) 211–21.

[165] Burnett (1977) 302. She further suggests (308–10) that the Trojans erred by not extinguishing the torch that was Paris, whose survival had been prophesied as bringing destruction to Troy, and that Troy was brought low after becoming excessively wealthy and proud. These points are not without merit, but Burnett assumes too much when she claims (310) that the 'old outrageous Troy was fully depicted for the audience of the *Alexander*'. The fragments reveal no such 'outrageousness' nor is there any parallel for this kind of Trojan 'materialism' (310) in other Greek sources, which commonly portray *Greeks* as greedy for Trojan wealth. The accusation is brought against Helen in *Trojan Women* (991–7). Similarly Burnett goes too far in charging the chorus with 'ugly irreverence' (310–12) when Euripidean characters in challenging or perilous situations regularly question the patronage, intentions, or identity of their gods (e.g. *Andr.* 1161–5, *El.* 971–2, 1245–6, *Her.* 347, 1340–6, *Ion* 436–51, 1312–13, *IT* 380–91, *Or.* 417–18). Lefkowitz (2003) showed that such expressions were not antithetical to piety in 5th-cent. Greek religion.

[166] Dyson and Lee (2000) have analysed the power of the scene presenting the burial of Astyanax as the crowning grief for the Trojan women.

smouldering as he spoke'.[167] But the annihilation is not yet complete. The chorus women draw attention to men with flaming firebrands (*Tro.* 1256–8) and comment: 'A new evil (*kainon ti kakon*) is about to be added to Troy's [woes]' (*Tro.* 1258–9). The renewed burning of Troy creates the sense of cyclical closure in a drama where we are persistently reminded that Troy has already been burned. It has earlier been implied that even the walls of Troy have already been destroyed by fire (*Tro.* 816–17), so that there remains something unnecessarily nihilistic and rather artificial about this second phase in the burning of Troy. The second phase of annihilation is carried out on the orders of Talthybius, who announces the departure of the captive women in the same speech with the oddly self-conscious expression 'so that the same *logos* ('speech' or 'story') may have two forms (*morphas*)' (*Tro.* 1265). Barlow comments that the use of the term *morphē* here, properly meaning 'shape' or 'form', 'is both rare and striking'.[168] Lee translates *morphas* as 'phases' in order to make sense of this difficult passage.[169] However, this obfuscates the true meaning *morphē*, and the term seems to be used deliberately in a metapoetic sense, drawing attention to two 'forms' of the same story just as the second burning of Troy has been set in motion.

In any event, this *new* woe is, once again, the *same* as the old woe, but this final use of the term *kainos* adds an important dimension to the novelty of perspective we have been tracing. The second burning of Troy within the time-frame of the play is a *new repetition*. The sense of repetition is further reinforced by reminders that this is the *second sack* of Troy. Poseidon's claim in the prologue that he is well disposed towards Troy is surprising in light of the *Iliad* where he is a pro-Greek deity. In *Trojan Women*, however, his position is clearly explained in terms of mythical history, since Poseidon had first built the walls of Troy together with Apollo as he reminds the audience (*Tro.* 6–7). In the second *stasimon*, Apollo alone is credited, but use of the technical term *kanōn*, the 'ruddled line' used by masons, links the two passages (*Tro.* 6, 814). This *stasimon* describes the first sack of Troy by Telamon and Heracles (*Tro.* 799–807) and explicitly casts

[167] Lee (1997*b*) *ad* 8; so also Paley (1872) i. 477.
[168] Barlow (1986) *ad* 1265.
[169] Lee (1997*b*) *ad* 1265–8.

both the first and second sack of Troy in terms of destruction by fire: 'twice, with a twofold pair of onslaughts, has the murderous spear-point destroyed the walls of Dardania with fire' (*Tro.* 816–17: δὶς δὲ δυοῖν πιτύλοιν τείχη πυρὶ Δαρδανίας | φονία κατέλυσεν αἰχμά). The ode continues with reference to the current burning of Troy implied by the fact that not even Ganymede's service to Zeus has saved Troy from fire (*Tro.* 821–5). So there are two burnings of Troy and the second burning (on the set of *Trojan Women*) takes place *in two parts*. The apparent double fall of Troy is thus anticipated in this *stasimon*. Anne Pippin Burnett observed that 'Troy seems to fall twice in echoing passages (806–7; 817–18) that actually describe one and the same event.'[170] There is perhaps also a nod to the Iliadic role of Poseidon as enemy of the Trojans in the presentation of the second destruction of Troy. 'I am leaving famous Ilium' he announces in the prologue (*Tro.* 25: λείπω τὸ κλεινὸν Ἴλιον), marking his abandonment of the city with an intertextual echo of the opening of *Alexandros* 'famous Ilium' (fr. 41a τὸ κλεινὸν [Ἴ]λιον), the first play of the Trojan trilogy set during the height of Troy's glory, and the final phase of Troy's fall in *Trojan Women* is described in terms evoking Poseidon's powers as the earth-shaking sea god: 'a quake, a quake floods over the entire city' (*Tro.* 1326: ἔνοσις ἄπασαν ἔνοσις . . . ἐπικλύζει πόλιν). Poseidon in *Trojan Women* is at once a supporter of Troy and also implicated in its destruction.

The message suggested by exploitation of the term *kainos* in *Trojan Women* is thus twofold. The audience is invited to consider old events from a new perspective (that of the vanquished), but also to contemplate the destructive nature of repeating the violence of past historical events. *Trojan Women* is unique in extant Euripides in its open-ended conclusion. As Francis Dunn saw, it is the only Euripidean tragedy to culminate in sung lyrics without any moralizing message or predictions for the future.[171] This heightens the sense of grief, expressed through the medium of lyric, presented in suspended

[170] Burnett (1977) 298. A further element of doubling in this choral ode is discussed by Burnett (297): 'a double ingratitude and a double injury in the fact that the city which twice provided lovers to the gods has twice been conquered by the Greeks'.

[171] Dunn (1996) 102 and cf. W. Barrett (1964) *ad* 1423–30 who notes that, apart from satyric, prosatyric, or textually problematic Euripidean dramas, *Tro.* is the only extant play by Euripides to end without an aetiology.

animation and in a continuing cycle from which there is virtually no relief. Dunn also observes that Aeschylus' *Persians* provides the closest comparable ending, and suggests that Euripides might be alluding to that tragedy.[172] The suggestion is intriguing. *Persians* explores the historical victory of the Greeks over the forces of Xerxes at the battle of Salamis in 480 BC from the perspective of the defeated Persians, as had Phrynichus' earlier *Phoenician Women*.[173] Scholars disagree over whether *Persians* was a patriotic celebration of Greek supremacy over the disgraced Persians, or a tragedy of profound *pathos* where the audience is asked to identify with its own mythologized 'historical' victims.[174] It is true, of course, that the Persians are conceptualized as stereotypically opposed to the Greeks in several ways, but I find myself very much in agreement with Garvie, who argues that Aeschylus kindles the necessary audience sympathy or empathy required for a successful tragedy through careful plot construction.[175] *Trojan Women* is firmly set in the distant mythical past, but it was also written for an audience experienced in war, and the play's performance history demonstrates how easily any community afflicted by war can relate to the sufferings it portrays.[176] The Athenians found overt reminders on the tragic stage of their responsibility for their allies' defeat too much to cope with, judging by Herodotus' account of the ban on Phrynichus' *Sack of Miletus*, when Phrynichus was fined one thousand drachmas after his play made the audience burst into tears (*Histories* 6.21). This means that political allusions which could potentially upset the Athenians needed to be couched in allegorical or mythological terms, and the events of *Trojan Women* will have had just such a loose contemporary resonance for the Athenians in the spring of 415 BC when the play was first performed.

In the winter of 416–415 BC Athens had besieged the island of Melos, a Spartan colony which had attempted to remain neutral in

[172] Dunn (1996) 102 with 217 n. 11.

[173] On Phrynichus' tragedy see Sommerstein (2008) i. 1–6, with fragments in Snell (1971) 75–7.

[174] For the 'patriotic' approach see especially Hall (1989) 56–100, (1996) 1–28 and *passim*, with some modification and responses to reviews in Hall (2006) 184–224, and Harrison (2000); for the 'empathetic' approach, see Loraux (2002) 44–53, Dué (2006) 57–90, Rosenbloom (2006*a*) 62–82, Garvie (2009) xx–xxxii and *passim*.

[175] Garvie (2009) xx–xxxii. In Torrance (forthcoming *a*) I argue in the context of oath-taking that Greek sources reveal no specifically *ethnic* hostility towards, or degradation of, Persians (or other barbarians).

[176] See Goff (2009) 78–135.

the Peloponnesian War and had refused to join forces with Athens. The Melians were ultimately forced to surrender, all the adult males were executed and the women and children were taken into slavery (Thuc. 5.116). In a uniquely unnaturalistic section of his narrative, Thucydides (5.84–116) casts the relationship between the Athenians and the Melians in highly tragic terms, with the Athenians valuing oppressive military might while the Melians draw attention to the fragility of human power.[177] That the Athenians were not entirely comfortable with such harsh military measures is evidenced by an event in 427 BC, also reported by Thucydides (3.1–50). When the island town of Mytilene revolted against Athens, the Athenians, in an angry mood, decided to put to death the entire male population and enslave the women and children (Thuc. 3.36), but they were ultimately uneasy about the destruction not only of the guilty, but of the entire population of the state (Thuc. 3.36). The decision was reversed in a subsequent debate the very next day (albeit by a narrow margin of votes, Thuc. 3.49). A second trireme, sent with all possible haste to overtake the first, managed to cancel the order in the nick of time (Thuc. 3.49).

It is unlikely that *Trojan Women* was written as an allegory for the sack of Melos. Too little time had elapsed between the historical event and the performance for the play to have been conceived in these terms.[178] Moreover, Euripidean tragedy eschews the kind of straightforward analogy that would cast the Trojans as Melians and the Greeks as Athenians.[179] Indeed, apart from the herald Talthybius, the only Greek characters in *Trojan Women* are the Spartans Helen and Menelaus, and in the context of the Peloponnesian War it seems pointed that the chorus of Trojan Women hope to end up in Athens and not in Sparta, home of the loathsome Helen (*Tro.* 207–13).[180] Nevertheless, Euripides did have time to revise his play, and could not

[177] Goff (2009) 28–9. Stahl (2003) 159–72 provides a careful analysis of the Melian dialogue in response to a number of opposing views on the subject, and also concludes (170) that there is a 'tragic aspect' inherent in the episode.

[178] Van Erp Taalman Kip (1987), Kovacs (1999) 3–4.

[179] Kovacs (1997) stresses that divine forces are behind the destruction of both Trojans and Greeks, and argues (176) that the Greeks 'are only slightly less pitiable than the Trojans'.

[180] Kovacs (1997) 164 notes that '[s]uch patriotic sentiments, praising Athens and criticizing Sparta, are quite ordinary in the plays of Euripides.' He gives the following references: *Med.* 824–50, *Hcld.* 303–5, 320–6, 957–8, *Andr.* 435–52, 595–601, *Supp.* 184–92, 403–8, *Her.* 1322–33.

have been unaware of the potential for allegorical understanding in light of so recent an event.[181] It seems clear from Thucydides' accounts of the so-called 'Mytilenian' and 'Melian' debates that there was a contemporary sense of concern over Athenian political actions of this kind, and Croally has argued that Thucydides' characterization of war as a violent teacher in his treatment of events in Corcyra is also important for understanding the didactic functions of *Trojan Women*.[182] Furthermore, Athens' own experience in the protracted Peloponnesian War against Sparta must have made the ten long years of the Trojan War a recognizable analogue for the audience. The first period of the Peloponnesian War had also lasted ten years, from 431 BC until the Peace of Nicias of 421. The controversial attack on Sicily by the Athenians that was under active consideration in the winter of 416/15, and was ultimately approved, was to fail disastrously leading to the renewal of war with Sparta (Thuc. 6–7). Pat Easterling reminds us that the city of Plataea, not far from Athens, had been thoroughly destroyed after it fell to the Peloponnesians in 427 and that in 421 the Athenians themselves had sacked Scione in Chalcidice, just as they would later sack Melos.[183] Moreover, the valour of the Silicians and Italians is praised in *Trojan Women* (220–9) in a completely anachronistic fashion, which might well have provoked an audience to reflect on the current Greek expedition.[184] All of these factors combine to suggest that *Trojan Women* has a strong potential for promoting self-reflection in an Athenian audience.[185] Indeed,

[181] The introduction to Isocrates' *Busiris* (24–30) claims, rather outrageously, that Euripides portrayed Socrates as Palamedes (ostensibly in the second play of the Trojan trilogy of 415 BC), so that the Athenians recognized the death of Socrates in the betrayal and death of Palamedes, and wept. Of course, this is completely impossible since Socrates did not die until 399 BC, but the parallel might have suggested itself in early 4th-cent. reperformances of the tragedy, and indeed from Plato's *Apology* (41b) where Palamedes is listed by Socrates as one of the figures he would like to meet in the Underworld. Importantly, however, it shows that the Athenians were capable of reading allegory into tragedy retrospectively, and indeed anachronistically.

[182] Croally (1994) 51, 56–8, 64–6, 83, 257.

[183] Easterling (1997*b*) 173. Dover (2001) 8 also refers us to the sack of Scione.

[184] Cf. Barlow (1986) 27.

[185] Sidwell (2001) proposes an unreasonable lack of humanity among the Athenians when he argues (41) that '[u]nlike ourselves . . . the Athenians could make distinctions between the pity to be accorded the victims of enslavement and the iron law of power politics which justified their enslavement.' Indeed Greek tragedy as a genre resolutely defies such straightforward moral distinctions and Garvie (2001), in the same volume, gives a far more balanced and sensitive analysis.

Poseidon announces programmatically in the prologue that the man who destroys cities is a fool, since he only ensures the wrath of the gods and his own ruin by sacking sacred temples (*Tro.* 94–6).[186] Performed for a community contemplating a dangerous new military adventure, *Trojan Women* warns, metapoetically, through the term *kainos*, that history can easily repeat itself, and that all too familiar calamities can be relived anew through repetition.

Sympathy for the Trojans has been developed in the trilogy's first play, *Alexandros*, and the Greeks have, conversely, been portrayed very negatively in the second tragedy *Palamedes*. *Alexandros* had an entirely Trojan cast. The events of the drama can be broadly reconstructed thanks to the hypothesis and surviving fragments.[187] The story of Paris' birth and exposure must have been related in the prologue, including Hecuba's dream of giving birth to a firebrand interpreted as signalling the child's future destruction of Troy, an event alluded to by Cassandra in *Trojan Women* (919–22). He is found, however, and raised by herdsmen, but he is presumed dead by the royal family and funeral games are instituted in his honour at Troy.[188] Circumstances develop where Paris, having reached manhood, comes to the Trojan court and successfully defends himself before Priam against an accusation of arrogance from his fellow herdsmen, as a result of which he is allowed to compete in these games. He excels in the contests and beats the Trojan princes Hector, who is magnanimous in defeat, and Deiphobus, who is enraged at apparently having been bested by a herdsman. Somehow Hecuba resolves to avenge his honour by killing this rustic interloper.[189] Before the murder is actually committed, however, Paris' identity is revealed by Cassandra, and Hecuba realizes that he is the child for whom she has been grieving. Before the publication by Coles in 1974 of the newly discovered hypothesis, it had been assumed, based on a

[186] Easterling (1997*b*) 174 marks these lines as signalling a 'cautionary tale' though 'the message is not a simple one'. Kovacs (1983) and (1996*b*) stresses that it is treating divinities with contempt rather than sacking cities in itself which Poseidon finds foolish.

[187] See Coles (1974), Scodel (1980) 20–42, Jouan (1998), Cropp (2004), Kannicht (2004) 174–204, Collard and Cropp (2008) viii. 33–75.

[188] Huys (1995) demonstrates that the pattern of the hero exposed at birth was popular in Euripidean tragic plots and shows how the plot of *Alexandros* relates to other Euripidean tragedies of this type.

[189] See Huys (1986).

summary of Hyginus, that Deiphobus had been the one to attempt to murder Paris. It now seems likely that this summary is based either on the *Alexandros* of Sophocles, or on a contaminated mingling of both versions. Unfortunately we know very little of the details of Sophocles' play, though its sparse fragments suggest it dealt with the same episode as the *Alexandros* of Euripides. References to the defeat of townsmen by a herdsman (S. fr. 93), to town and country folk (S. frr. 92, 94), to poor lodgings (S. fr. 96), to the test of Lydian stone (S. fr. 91a), used to determine the quality of gold, to rearing (S. fr. 95), suckling (S. fr. 98), midwifery (S. fr. 99), and to remembrance (S. fr. 100),[190] all point to an account of the rearing of Paris as a poor herdsman and to a commemorative competition in which he defeated the princes.[191]

If *Trojan Women* functions, for the audience, as a new lament on old woes, the notion is anticipated in *Alexandros*. In the play's *parodos* and first episode, Hecuba seems inconsolable in her grief as she remembers her lost child. The chorus members try to convince Hecuba to let go of her misery, but with little success. They say that death is 'a common grief' (fr. 43.1: *κοινὸν ἄχος*) and suggest that it is wise 'to feel pain moderately' (fr. 43.2: *μετρίως ἀλγεῖν*), they remind her that no one is fortunate in everything (fr. 44), they acknowledge her suffering but urge her to end her grief (fr. 45.1: *οἶδ᾽· ἀλλὰ κάμπτειν τῷ χρόνῳ λύπας χρέων* 'I know; but you should set aside your woes with time'), and it is clear that much time has passed since Paris' exposure (cf. fr. 42: *καὶ χρόνου προὔβαινε πούς* 'and the foot of time advanced'). Hecuba responds: 'I should, but saying this is easier than bearing evils' (fr. 45.2: *χρή· τοῦτο δ᾽ εἰπεῖν ῥᾷον ἢ φέρειν κακά*). The first few lines of fr. 46 are incomplete but the gist is as follows. The chorus reminds Hecuba of her children (fr. 46.1), presumably her many other children who are still alive, but Hecuba continues to lament because of an infant (fr. 46.2), who must be Paris. The chorus sympathize with Priam's (and presumably Hecuba's) misfortunes (fr. 46.3), and Hecuba takes up this sentiment mentioning that she

[190] Radt (1999) 147–9.

[191] Stinton (1965) 53 suggests that Sophocles may have invented the motif of Paris taking part in his own funeral games 'and the ingenious motive, the recovery of his beloved steer'. We now know that the steer must have been specific to Sophocles, since it is nowhere mentioned in the hypothesis to the Euripidean version, where Paris seems to have come to the palace at Troy not to retrieve his bull but because of an accusation by some herdsmen.

and Priam (who must be included as the subject, given the previous line), who have suffered, know what the chorus means (fr. 46.4).

In the only complete line of this fragment, the chorus once more urge Hecuba to cease her grieving saying 'you should not lament old events with new tears' (fr. 46.5: *παλαιὰ καινοῖς δακρύοις οὐ χρὴ στένειν*). The remainder of the fragment suggests that Hecuba nevertheless continues to do so. There are references to a mother (fr. 46.6), to someone who is said to have perished (fr. 46.7), and to something which is not blessed (fr. 46.8), and the lament for the lost child seems to have been disrupted only by the appearance of another one of Hecuba's children (probably Cassandra) at the nearby shrine (fr. 46.11–12).[192] The Hecuba of the opening scenes of *Alexandros*, overwhelmed with grief, actually sounds very much like the Hecuba of *Trojan Women*, and there is an intriguing parallel encapsulated in the notion of Hecuba lamenting *old* woes (*palaia*) with *new* tears (*kainois dakruois*), a metapoetic expression of novelty suggesting that Euripides invented the context in which Hecuba continued to mourn the loss of Paris for many many years. This grief is precisely what drives the dramatic tension during Hecuba's attempted murder of Paris, and this too seems to have been a Euripidean innovation possibly marked metapoetically by the term *aelpton* 'unexpected', if *Alexandros* fr. 62 comes from the recognition scene as several scholars have argued.[193] Certainly the death-averted plot-type is one Euripides favoured. His *Ion* and *Cresphontes* both feature situations where a mother unwittingly attempts to kill her son, and in his *IT* a sister almost kills her brother.

The introduction of Hecuba to the episode dramatized in *Alexandros* may have been new in itself. Kovacs observed the thematic parallel between Palamedes, whose intelligence in a sense creates his downfall, and *Alexandros* fr. 62i (Kannicht = Snell fr. 44), where Paris exclaims that he is about to die because of the excellence of his mind, which for others is a salvation.[194] The second play in the trilogy, *Palamedes*, thus plays out the death scenario which is averted in the first play. Nevertheless, the connections between the first and third plays of the

[192] On Cassandra's presence at the shrine, see the discussion of Cropp (2004) 38.

[193] See Cropp (2004) 87 *ad* fr. 62 with further references. A parallel use of *aelpton* occurs in Euripides' *Children of Heracles* (930), where the term underlines the innovation of making Eurystheus a captive as discussed by McDermott (1991) 127–9.

[194] Kovacs (1997) 169.

trilogy remain the strongest, with the figure of Hecuba as the most important link. She is central to the action of both tragedies and has an extraordinary role in *Trojan Women*, where she never once leaves the stage and where each new calamity is seen through her eyes.[195] This is most apparent when she becomes chief mourner for Astyanax in lieu of his mother Andromache, whose absence is contrived by Neoptolemus' sudden departure. Similarly the statement made in *Alexandros* (fr. 46.5), referring to new tears wept over old woes, also creates a strong link between the first and third plays, since, in *Trojan Women*, the audience will experience precisely such lamentation of old woes with new tears. It seems important that Hecuba in *Alexandros* does *not* heed the advice of the chorus to give up her grief. This provides continuity of character with the Hecuba of *Trojan Women* who draws metapoetic attention to the performance of her lamentation.

We noted above that the formal invocation of the Muse in the first *stasimon* of *Trojan Women* is unique in tragedy, but the term *mousa* 'muse' or 'song' occurs frequently in Euripides (in contrast to the plays of Aeschylus and Sophocles),[196] and is important in this drama, which is unusually dependent on music and song for its dramatic effect.[197] Hecuba's opening monody falls into two parts. The first

[195] Hall (2010) 269 observes that 'her role must have challenged even the greatest of ancient actors'.

[196] In addition to the examples from *Trojan Women*, discussed in this section, the term *mousa* and cognates appear in extant Euripidean plays at *Cyc.* 426, 489 (on which see pp. 257–8), *Alc.* 344, 445, 760, 962, *Med.* 196, 421, 833, 1085, 1089, *Hipp.* 452, 989, 1135, 1428, *Andr.* 477 (discussed above), *Supp.* 489, 883, 906 (discussed in Ch. 3), *El.* 703, 717, 875, *Her.* 674, 676, 686, 791, 1022, *IT* 145, 182, 1105, *Ion* 526, 755, 884, 1091, 1097, *Hel.* 165, 174, 1108, 1345, *Pho.* 50, 785, 788, 807b, 1028, 1499, 1728, *Ba.* 410, 563, 825, *IA* 1064 (I do not include the spurious *Rhesus* in which Rhesus' mother is a Muse who appears *ex machina*), and in the fragments at *Alcmene* fr. 88, *Antiope* frr. 183, 188.2, 223.93, *Ino* fr. 407, *Wise Melanippe* fr. 481, *Palamedes* (frr. 580, 588, discussed in Ch. 3), *Stheneboea* fr. 663 (discussed in Ch. 3), *Hypsipyle* frr. 752f.11, 752h.7, 759a.101.

Examples in Aeschylus and Sophocles are rare by comparison, even when taking into account the discrepancy in the amount of surviving text by the three tragedians. Where single plays of Euripides contain often multiple examples of the term *mousa* and cognates, there are only isolated examples in Aeschylus and Sophocles: A. *Supp.* 695, *Ag.* 801, *LB* 467, *Eum.* 308, [*PB*] 461 (discussed in Ch. 3), *Edonians* fr. 60, *Thracian Women* fr. 84a, S. *Ant.* 965, *Trach.* 642, *OC* 692, *Daedalus* fr. 159, *Thamyras* fr. 245, two fragments from unidentified dramas (frr. 819 and 852.3), and the dubious fr. 1130.12. Sophocles is said to have written a play entitled *Muses*, but this may be the same play as *Thamyras* (see Radt (1999) 348).

[197] See Raeburn (2001).

deals with her own personal sufferings in recitative anapaests (*Tro.* 98–121), the second, in more musical lyric anapaests, focuses on the fate of Troy (*Tro.* 122–52). At the point of transition between these two metrical schemes, at the end of the recitative anapaests, Hecuba exclaims (*Tro.* 120–1) μοῦσα δὲ χαὔτη τοῖς δυστήνοις | ἄτας κελαδεῖν ἀχορεύτους 'this too is a muse (*mousa*) for those in misfortune, to sing of ruin unattended by choruses'. The sentiment that ruin (*atē*) is *achoreutos* 'unattended by choruses', i.e. 'joyless', is straightforward enough, but it also announces metatheatrically Hecuba's shift into song while she is still unattended by the chorus.[198] The *atē* 'ruin', which is a 'muse' for those in misfortune, is specifically a song about the Trojan War and the devastation of Troy, repeatedly referred to as *atē* throughout this play (*Tro.* 121, 137, 530, 535). Indeed in the final instance, Hecuba will identify her own fate with that of Troy when she refers to her own *atē* 'ruin' (*Tro.* 1314), and it is noteworthy in this context that the Judgment of Paris is referred to as *atē* 'ruin' leading to disaster in the *Iliad* (24.28–30). The self-referentiality of Hecuba's lamentation for Troy continues more explicitly still at the end of the second section of her monody. She appeals to the entering chorus women to join her in lamentation (*Tro.* 143–5). She will lead them (*Tro.* 146), but it will not be the same song (*Tro.* 149) she led for the Trojan gods 'with fine-stamping beating of chorus leader's foot' (*Tro.* 150–1: ποδὸς ἀρχεχόρου πλαγαῖς . . . | εὐκόμποις). Hecuba thus anticipates the song of the chorus in the first *stasimon*, where they too refer to their past joyful choral dancing at Troy (*Tro.* 553–5) in contrast to their present song of lamentation.

The notion raised by Hecuba that lamentation and memorializing the past through song are somehow cathartic is important for understanding *Trojan Women*, and explains why her character is unable to heed the chorus's advice to stop weeping for past woes in *Alexandros*. The chorus of *Trojan Women* confirm Hecuba's presentation of lament when they comment 'how sweet are tears for those who have fared badly, and lamentations of dirges, and the muse (*mousa*)

[198] Croally (1994) 244 correctly identifies this passage as self-referential but mistakenly claims that ἀχορεύτους means 'undanceable' (*LSJ* give no such meaning). This leads him to conclude that the self-reference is 'inappropriate', given the performance medium. To be fair, Croally is influenced in his analysis by scholars who claim that Euripidean drama is full of inappropriate elements, a position which I cannot accept as will be clear from my arguments in Ch. 2 about Euripides' deep concern for literary appropriateness.

who possesses grief' (*Tro.* 608–9). Cassandra claims to reject this concept when she exclaims 'may my muse not become a songstress who sings of woes' (*Tro.* 384–5: μηδὲ μοῦσά μοι | γένοιτ' ἀοιδὸς ἥτις ὑμνήσει κακά), but she proclaims this precisely *while she is singing of disasters*, including the murder of Agamemnon and her own murder (*Tro.* 358–62), the matricide of Orestes (*Tro.* 363), the sacrifice of Iphigenia (*Tro.* 370–3), the deaths of numerous Greek soldiers far from home (*Tro.* 374–9) while their women died widows or childless (*Tro.* 380–2). The content of Cassandra's song thus paradoxically confirms that her muse *is* a song of woes, and we know this to be the case also from Aeschylus' *Agamemnon* (1073–330) where she relates the crimes of the house of Atreus and her own destruction. Diggle and Kovacs excise *Tro.* 384–5,[199] but other editors have no issue with the lines.[200] Indeed the sentiment expressed is thematically relevant, and the apparent paradox is closely paralleled, for example, by the proclamation in Euripides' war tragedy *Suppliants* (489) that the Muses love peace above all (see Ch. 3, p. 171). Nicole Loraux observed that *Trojan Women* provides 'the most systematic reflection' on tragedy's complex appropriation of the Muse into the process of lamentation, and Charles Segal discussed how the 'Muse of Tragedy' is both the divine inspiration of technical skill and 'the figure who registers the horror in [the poet's] world'.[201]

Cassandra also draws metatheatrical attention, in the same speech, to the dance she performs (*Tro.* 325), which she says is *like* (rather than different from) the dances performed during her father's most blessed fortunes (*Tro.* 327–8). She calls the dance holy (*Tro.* 328), asks Apollo to lead it (*Tro.* 329), and invites her mother to dance (*Tro.* 332), but she is clearly deranged (*Tro.* 342, 349) as she performs a disturbing and perverted celebration of her 'marriage' to Agamemnon (*Tro.* 329–41).[202] As Mossman observes, Cassandra thus transforms tragic metaphor into literal reality in a most disconcerting way, 'in stark contrast to the Aeschylean Cassandra, whose metaphors cluster densely, but whose conduct remains consonant with the nature

[199] Diggle (1981), and Barlow (1986) who uses Diggle's text, Kovacs (1999).
[200] The lines are retained by Parmentier (1948), Biehl (1989), Lee (1997*b*).
[201] Loraux (2002) 68, C. Segal (1993) 13–33, quotation from 21.
[202] Scodel (1998) notes (147) that Cassandra's 'apparent excess of sexual acquiescence conceals an attitude completely opposite to that of the "normal" captive'. See also Rutherford (2001) on the distortion of marital and rhetorical conventions in the Cassandra scene.

of her situation'.[203] Cassandra's performance of a perverse marriage ritual in *Trojan Women* can be linked with other examples of Euripides' manipulation of Aeschylean language discussed in Chapters 1 and 2. Overall, however, the play and the trilogy suggest that grieving for woes past and present is essential for human survival, and that memorialization through song and poetry is an appropriate vehicle for such lamentation. Memorialization through the muse of writing is also important in this trilogy. We discussed in Chapter 3 how the motif of writing is central in *Palamedes*, where its inventor (Palamedes) is associated with the muses (frr. 580, 588). By the schemes of Odysseus, who plants a forged letter in his tent to frame him for treason, he becomes a victim of his fellow Greeks by means of his own invention. Palamedes had stressed that writing is a cure for forgetfulness (fr. 578), and this provides a framework for understanding Hecuba's anger and grief over the commemoration of Astyanax (*Tro.* 1188–91): 'What could a poet (*mousopoios*, literally 'muse-maker') write on your tomb? "The Argives killed this child once because they feared him"? The epigram is a shameful one for Greece.' Here, as in *Palamedes*, writing is associated with memorialization and with the shameful actions of the Greeks, and it is clear that one of the functions of the *Palamedes* play within the trilogy is to ensure antipathy for the Greeks in order to heighten sympathy in the final tragedy for the Trojans, whose sufferings 'have provided songs for the muses of mortals hereafter', as Hecuba observes (*Tro.* 1245: *μούσαις ἀοιδὰς δόντες ὑστέρων βροτῶν*).

The end of *Trojan Women* reminds us that history is written by the victors. Who is the *mousopoios* writing an 'epigram' for Astyanax if not Euripides in this tragedy? Hecuba may say that without the Trojan War the Trojans 'would have been unknown' (*Tro.* 1244: *ἀφανεῖς ἂν ὄντες*), but she also laments that the destruction of Troy will deprive it of its 'famous name' (*Tro.* 1278: *τὸ κλεινὸν ὄνομ'*). Certainly Troy will no longer be 'famous' in the same way it was in *Alexandros* (fr. 41a), and being remembered in song is presented as little consolation for the fact that Troy will now be known for its destruction. The chorus women echo Hecuba when they say that the temples of their gods will fall, becoming nameless (*Tro.* 1319: *ἀνώνυμοι*), and that 'the name of the land will be invisible' (*Tro.* 1322: *ὄνομα δὲ γᾶς ἀφανὲς εἶσιν*). The chorus's use of the term *ἀφανής*

[203] Mossman (2005) 359.

to lament the obliteration of their land recalls Hecuba's statement that the Trojans will *not* be ἀφανεῖς 'unknown' or 'invisible'. How can we reconcile these apparently contradictory attitudes? Are the names of Troy and the Trojans going to be remembered in song or are they going to be 'unknown', 'invisible'? The answer lies once more in the drama's tension between metapoetic suggestion and internal perspective. Of course, the tragedy itself is a demonstration that the name of Troy *is* remembered, but from the perspective of the defeated the 'famous name' of Troy, as they knew it, and as was presented in *Alexandros*, has disappeared. It is 'invisible' in the sense that it exists only in words. The Trojans, their city, and their sufferings are remembered only through the songs of the victors.

In the context of Euripidean drama, *Trojan Women* seems to have been an experiment in dramatic form. In addition to its unusual open-ended conclusion, its structure is surprisingly linear, without any dramatic turns in the plot that we might expect from Euripides and which we know he exploited in the first two plays of the trilogy. There is no messenger-speech, and no use is made of either of the commonly used stage machines, the *mēchanē* and the *ekkyklēma*, leading Barbara Goff to comment that the 'poverty of device is like the destitution of the women themselves'.[204] There are spectacular scenes, to be sure, but each of these reiterates devastation. The two gods in the prologue remind us that the Greeks will suffer (*Tro.* 65–97), Cassandra's triumphant dance with the torches (*Tro.* 306–43) is overwritten by audience knowledge that she will be brutally slaughtered on arrival at Agamemnon's palace, Andromache's entrance on a cart as part of Neoptolemus' plunder shows that she is transitioning into slavery (*Tro.* 568–76), and the delivery of Astyanax's body on Hector's shield (*Tro.* 1156–7) speaks for itself. The debate between Hecuba and Helen provides welcome relief from the relentless lamentations of the Trojan women, but even in this debate Hecuba's anger 'shines through her rhetoric' while Helen's logic is 'ruthless' and 'self-serving'.[205] Our knowledge that Helen will suffer no punishment means that this scene also emphasizes Hecuba's defeat. Overall, this tragedy privileges didactic potential over plot structure, as has been demonstrated in most detail by Neil Croally in his

[204] Goff (2009) 23.
[205] Mossman (2005) 362. Lloyd (1984) emphasizes Helen's rhetorical skill.

perceptive study of *Trojan Women* as a didactic war tragedy, which questions imperialist agendas.[206] I have argued here that metapoetic techniques work in concert with this didactic agenda. Through metapoetic language, Euripides' Trojan trilogy teaches us that human nature is bound to a cycle of lamenting old woes with new musings, and seems fated to repeat the same kind of historical disasters which give rise to new causes for lamentation.

ἀεί τι καινὸν ἡμέρα παιδεύεται 'a day always teaches something new' (Euripides, fr. 945, unidentified drama). The connection made in this fragment between didacticism and a single day is strikingly emblematic of the tragic genre since the single day is the unit of time into which, remarkably, most Greek tragedy is collapsed (Aristotle, *Poetics* 1449^{b}13).[207] Certainly *Trojan Women* and the Trojan trilogy seem particularly and unusually loaded with didactic purpose in the broader context of Euripidean tragedy. It is not surprising then that the metapoetic concept of novelty, so often related to clever mythical innovations in Euripides, is here more seriously associated with the kind of visceral and heart-wrenching woes of forced child abandonment and the devastation of war, the very type of actions humans should know to avoid, and yet keep repeating anew.

METAPOETIC GAMES IN *CYCLOPS*

All the plays discussed so far have filled ellipses in Homeric events. Aristotle tells us in his *Poetics* (1459$^{a–b}$) that the *Cypria* and the *Little Iliad* were far more fruitful as sources for tragedy, due to their episodic nature, than the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, each of which focuses on one part of the Trojan War saga. Still, Aeschylus composed two connected trilogies, one based on the events of the *Iliad*, one on the events of the *Odyssey*. The former was made up of *Myrmidons*, *Nereids*, and *Phrygians*, corresponding roughly with events in *Iliad*

[206] Croally (1994); see also Gregory (1991) 155–83, Rosenbloom (2006*b*) for whom Helen in *Trojan Women* is symbolic of the economy of naval imperialism, and Dué (2006) 148–50, who emphasizes that the Athenians are 'implicated' (150) in this version of the sack of Troy. Gregory (2002) discusses Euripides as a 'social critic'.

[207] On time in Greek tragedy, see De Romilly (1968) and, more recently, J. Barrett (2007), De Jong (2007) and Lloyd (2007) on time in Aeschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides, respectively.

9–24.[208] The latter comprised *Ghost-Raisers*, *Penelope*, and *Bone-Gatherers*, and was followed by the satyr-drama *Circe*, based on *Odyssey* 11, 19, 24, and 10, respectively. Sophocles also seems to have written several plays based on episodes in the *Odyssey*, judging from the titles *Nausicaa or Washer-Women* (*Plyntriai*) (*Od.* 6), *Phaeacians* (*Od.* 7–12), and *The Footwashing* (*Niptra*) (*Od.* 19).[209] Euripides, by contrast, seems to have written only one work based on a specific Homeric episode. This is the fortunately extant *Cyclops*, the only complete surviving satyr-play, which dramatizes the adventures of Odysseus and his men in the cave of the Cyclops Polyphemus, as in *Odyssey* 9. With the exception of the almost certainly spurious *Rhesus* (based on *Iliad* 10), fragments and titles of lost plays suggest that *Cyclops* is a rare example of a direct adaptation of Homer by Euripides.[210] This explains why the play is, unusually in the Euripidean canon, a new rival to, rather than continuation of, the paradigmatic Homeric story. The drama is hilarious, to be sure, but I shall argue that the sophisticated metapoetic strategies employed in *Cyclops* have the potential to encourage serious reflection, and that they contribute to the sense of collective audience response generated by satyr-drama in relation to both humour and politics.

Wilfrid Wetzel published a detailed collation of the correspondences between *Cyclops* and *Odyssey* 9, which I shall not repeat here.[211] Still, it shall be helpful to summarize some salient events, common to both versions, before embarking on an analysis of *Cyclops*. Odysseus arrives in the land of the Cyclopes after the sack of Troy, with his men, looking for additional provisions (*Cyc.* 96–8, 133–7, *Od.* 9.224–9), and having in his possession a wineskin containing a particularly potent wine given to him by a figure called Maron (*Cyc.* 139–41, *Od.* 9.196–212). Odysseus and his men come to the cave of Polyphemus, who refuses them hospitality, and claims to have no fear of Zeus or the

[208] For further details see West (2000), Michelakis (2002) 22–57, Sommerstein (2008) iii. 134–49, 156–61, 262–9.

[209] Cf. Sommerstein (forthcoming *b*).

[210] Sutton (1974*a*) argued that satyr-drama as a genre is much indebted to the *Odyssey* in terms of its subject matter, but most of Sutton's observations are based on generic folk-tale elements rather than specific adaptations of Homeric material.

[211] Wetzel (1965) with a convenient table for quick reference at the end of the study (156–9). Katsouris (1997) observes some elements of Euripidean innovation within these correspondences, stressing potential allusions to earlier plays and to contemporary social, political, and philosophical ideas.

other gods (*Cyc.* 316–38, *Od.* 9.273–9). He immediately kills two of Odysseus' men and eats them (*Cyc.* 377–410, *Od.* 9.288–93). Odysseus plies Polyphemus with the wine of Maron and gets him drunk (*Cyc.* 412–24, *Od.* 9. 345–62). When the drunken Cyclops asks him for his name in exchange for a gift, Odysseus claims his name is 'No-one' and the Cyclops gives him the 'gift' of being eaten last of his men (*Cyc.* 548–51, *Od.* 9.362–70).[212] Once Polyphemus has passed out, Odysseus and his men heat a huge sharpened stake in the fire and bore it into the eye of the drunken Cyclops, a process described in an extended simile as being like boring a hole into a ship (*Cyc.* 455–63, *Od.* 9.375–86). Polyphemus makes a fool of himself by shouting that 'No-one' is attacking him (*Cyc.* 673–5, *Od.* 9.399–412). After he has blinded Polyphemus and is in the process of escaping from the land, Odysseus reveals his real name to the Cyclops, which prompts Polyphemus to recognize the fulfilment of an old prophecy (*Cyc.* 689–700, *Od.* 9.502–17). The number of features and details common to both versions is remarkable. The plot of *Cyclops* is far more closely connected to its source than are the plots of other Euripidean plays, such as *Electra* or *Phoenician Women*, which also ostensibly dramatize the same episode as an earlier and clearly identifiable extant source.

Nevertheless, there are important differences between *Cyclops* and its Homeric model, all of which have to do with the drama's metapoetic agenda and with its distinctive genre. The most obvious difference is the presence of Silenus and his sons, who form the chorus of satyrs required for a satyr-drama.[213] As a satyr-drama, *Cyclops* promotes a collective consciousness in its audience. This consciousness is based both on masculine 'libidinal awareness', as Edith Hall has argued,[214] and on the concept of collective worship of Dionysus, the very purpose of the City Dionysia festival, where satyr-dramas were performed as the final part of 'tragic' tetralogies in honour of Dionysus, so that a chorus of satyrs in service to Dionysus by its very nature emblematizes the notion of such collective worship, albeit in a

[212] Euripides stays much closer to Homer in these details than did Cratinus in his comedy *Odysseus and Company* (*Odyssēs*), which dramatized the same episode, and where Odysseus apparently commanded the Cyclops to drink the wine and then ask him his name (fr. 145).

[213] See Konstan (1990) on how the satyrs are essential to the structure of *Cyclops*, and Seidensticker (2003) on the role of the chorus in satyr-drama.

[214] Hall (2006) 143.

humorous manner.[215] Maarit Kaimio and her team have shown that metatheatrical references to dancing in Euripides' *Cyclops* 'are the most Dionysiac in all of extant satyric drama'.[216] In the following discussion I argue that the metapoetic games of *Cyclops* contribute to a collective and Dionysiac consciousness by making such blatant intertextual jokes that the audience cannot have failed to experience a sense of collective recognition, while at the same time prompting serious audience contemplation of embarking on perilous naval expeditions.

Shocked and appalled that the Cyclops has eaten two of his men in the cave, Odysseus stumbles out onto the stage.[217] He exclaims: 'O Zeus, what am I to say after seeing dreadful and unbelievable (*ou pista*) events inside the cave, things similar to stories (*mythoi*) and not to mortal deeds' (*Cyc.* 375–6). These lines explicitly cast both *Cyclops* and events in *Odyssey* 9 as unbelievable fictions, and several scholars have noticed the self-referential nature of these lines, which break the dramatic illusion.[218] The metapoetic importance of the term *mythos* in Euripides, as traced throughout this book, lends further weight to the obvious intertextual significance of this statement. Matthew Wright and Richard Hunter have both discussed how the characters in *Cyclops* seem to act with knowledge of prior poetic events, or 'metamythologically' to use Wright's term.[219] Polyphemus, for example, has a 'suspiciously large amount of information'[220] about

[215] On the Dionysiac qualities and functions of satyr-drama see Seaford (1984) esp. 26–44, Konstan (1990) 223–7, Easterling (1997*a*), Kaimio et al. (2001) 74–8. Napolitano (2005) links allusions to Athenian drinking practices in *Cyclops* with a collective audience response.

[216] Kaimio et al. (2001) 42–5.

[217] Odysseus is not trapped in the cave as in the *Odyssey*, where Polyphemus seals the cave with an enormous boulder, which only he can move. The drama requires Odysseus to be free to come in and out so that he can address Silenus and the chorus in the absence of the Cyclops; cf. Davidson (2002) 52–6, Napolitano (2005) 47. In fact the cave in Euripides is imagined as a tunnel with an opening at either end, as is the cave of Philoctetes in Sophocles' *Philoctetes* (*Cyc.* 707, *Phil.* 19). Seaford (1984) *ad* 706–7 and 48–51 argues that since the rare expression from S. *Phil.* ἀμφιτρής 'pierced through' is used elliptically by Euripides it must be a deliberate allusion and the most likely date for *Cyclops* is 408 BC (one year after the production of S. *Phil.*). C. Müller (1997) 97–110 also sees an allusion. Wright (2006*a*) 23–7 argues *pace* Seaford for a date of 412.

[218] Ussher (1978) *ad* 375–6, Seaford (1984) *ad* 376, Biehl (1986) *ad* 376, Napolitano (2003) 128, Wright (2006*a*) 39–40, Hunter (2009) 59.

[219] Wright (2006*a*) esp. 31–42, Hunter (2009) 53–77.

[220] Wright (2006*a*) 34.

Odysseus and his exploits (*Cyc.* 277–84), and he seems to have 'read the Homeric script'.[221] Silenus 'knows his *Odyssey* rather well', with his claim to having been blown off course at Cape Malea (*Cyc.* 18–20) being 'an obvious replay of the fate of Odysseus and his crew' (*Odyssey* 9.80–1).[222] Moreover, he employs epic language explaining how his sons sat at the oars and 'whitened the grey sea with their dashing' (*Cyc.* 15–17; cf. *Od.* 9.177–80, *Od.* 12. 172).[223] Silenus and the chorus already know of Odysseus by reputation (*Cyc.* 104, 450), and the chorus give a vulgar version of the common poetic explanation for Helen's abandonment of Menelaus, namely that she desired Trojan gold (*Cyc.* 177–87). Odysseus' claim to have appeased the shrines of Poseidon, whom he already knows to be Polyphemus' father (*Cyc.* 286–95), clearly stems from an expectation, based on knowledge of the *Odyssey*, that Polyphemus might invoke his father's wrath against Odysseus. But Polyphemus in *Cyclops* has no care for his father's shrines (*Cyc.* 318–19), and he does not use Odysseus' name to bring down Poseidon's curse on him at the end of the drama, as had his counterpart in the *Odyssey* (9.502–36). Rather, in Euripides, Polyphemus refers vaguely to Odysseus' long drifting on the sea as part of the ancient prophecy he had received (*Cyc.* 699–700).

We shall return to the drama's open-ended conclusion in due course. Suffice it to observe, for now, that these metapoetic markers in *Cyclops* are remarkably overt. Given its humorous nature and extreme reliance on double entendre for its jokes, satyr-drama can be metapoetically, and indeed sexually, explicit in a way tragedy cannot,[224] an issue to be discussed further in Chapter 5. In the context of the collective audience experience particular to satyr-drama, it seems significant that an intertextual relationship with earlier poetry is so clearly announced in *Cyclops*. Moreover, the same can be said for the Dionysiac aspects of performance in this drama, where the proclaimed *absence* of Dionysus during Dionysiac activities insistently (and comically) draws metatheatrical attention to the very pervasive presence of Dionysiac ritual, with examples ranging from the sophisticated to the ridiculous. In the prologue, Silenus, father of the satyrs,

[221] Hunter (2009) 63. [222] Hunter (2009) 60.

[223] Katsouris (1997) 4 notes that the expression in Homer is formulaic and therefore 'probably known to the spectators'.

[224] Hall (2006) 148 notes that sexual double entendre is 'a preferred mode of satyric discourse'; cf. Arnott (1972) 27–30 on Euripides' exploitation of double entendre for comic purposes in *Cyclops*.

describes his willing servitude to Dionysus, and announces the entry song of the chorus of satyrs as a *sikinnis* (*Cyc.* 37–40), a fast-paced dance typical of satyr-drama. The sons of Silenus address their sheep in the first part of the *parodos*. In the epode, the *chorus* of satyrs lament their present situation with the words 'There is no Bromius (i.e. Dionysus) here, here there are no *choruses*' (*Cyc.* 63: *οὐ τάδε Βρόμιος, οὐ τάδε χοροί*). The outrageous disparity between their words and their actions casts them effectively as fools.[225] Like the chorus, Silenus seems oblivious to the fact that the very presence of the chorus contradicts his claim to being in 'a land with no choruses' (*Cyc.* 124: *ἄχορον . . . χθόνα*). It is obviously a lamentable state of affairs for the satyrs that there are no *other* choruses in the land of the Cyclopes, but the audience will experience these statements with a pleasing ironical and metatheatrical understanding. Watching a chorus singing that there is no chorus is a striking play on the kind of tragic choral self-referentiality, discussed by Henrichs, where the chorus, particularly when singing of Dionysus and the Dionysiac, draw attention to their own dancing.[226] Moreover the satyrs' claim that there is no Bromius is explicitly contradicted by Odysseus' observation on arrival that he and his men 'seem to have disembarked in a city of Bromius' (*Cyc.* 99: *Βρομίου πόλιν ἔοιγμεν ἐσβαλεῖν*). Marshall has noticed that *Cyclops* contains a remarkably low ratio of song to speech for a late Euripidean drama,[227] but Seidensticker cautions that 'brevity and metrical simplicity of the satyr songs should not . . . lead to the assumption that the element of dance was comparatively unimportant'.[228] It is significant, too, that much of the

[225] Worman (2008) 140 with nn. 57 and 58 links the goatskin costumes of the satyrs with specifically Dionysiac performance. If this is the case, verbal and visual disparity are further emphasized in this choral song.

[226] Henrichs (1995).

[227] Marshall (2005) 110–11.

[228] Seidensticker (2003) 110, observing that satyrs can dance even when they were not singing as indicated by *Cyc.* 94, 204, 220–1, and S. *Trackers* 217–20. He argues (108) that satyr choruses actively interfere in dramatic events and are not confined (like tragic choruses) to singing and commenting on the action, and (110–17) that vase paintings depicting satyrs normally portray them in motion. Kaimio et al. (2001) 42, 65, 70–1 make similar observations about the vigorous dancing that characterizes satyr-drama but maintain (73) that the chorus of *Cyclops* does not differ from the choruses of tragedy in the sense that they 'are mostly spectators of action taking place independently of them'. It seems true, in the case of *Cyclops*, at any rate, that the chorus threatens to interfere in events (in assisting Odysseus to blind the Cyclops, for example), but never actually does (Odysseus must rely on his own men).

speech in this play is concerned with intertextual poetic performance, poetic metaphor, and the Dionysiac. The drama itself is framed by references to Dionysus in its opening and closing lines.[229]

Polyphemus also emphasizes that 'there is no Dionysus' (*Cyc.* 204: *οὐχὶ Διόνυσος*), but soon thereafter describes his own activities in strangely Dionysiac terms. He feasts in his cave on wild meat and milk and then uses the empty milk pail as a drum, which he beats (*Cyc.* 323–8). When it snows, he wraps his body with the skins of beasts (*Cyc.* 329–31). He gives himself no pain and rejects laws (*Cyc.* 338–40). For all his rejection of the gods (*Cyc.* 316–21), the activities described by the Cyclops are strikingly Dionysiac. Roaming in the wilderness, dressing in animal skins, feasting on wild meat, and drawing milk from nature are all associated with the worship of Dionysus in classical Greek sources,[230] as is the beating of drums (*Cyc.* 65, 204–5, *Ba.* 58–61). Agave's gleeful and unwitting murder and dismemberment of her son at the end of Euripides' *Bacchae* shows that those possessed by Dionysus feel no pain and reject ordinary human laws, at least while in the Dionysiac trance. Ultimately the Cyclops completes his Dionysiac experience by becoming intoxicated on wine (which makes him sing, *Cyc.* 420–46), by planning to summon his fellow Cyclopes to join in the revel (an attempt at Dionysiac communality, *Cyc.* 445–6, 531–40), and by expressing sexual desire (for Silenus, *Cyc.* 585–9).[231] We should not forget either that he has also enslaved a band of satyrs, whose normal master is Dionysus (*Cyc.* 76–81). The Cyclops is cast as a distorted caricature of a Dionysiac figure, and the point is underlined by Odysseus when he concludes his speech describing Polyphemus' intoxication on wine and subsequent song by remarking, paradoxically, that 'the Cyclops is not similar to Dionysus' (*Cyc.* 436). This develops the pattern initiated by the chorus' self-contradictory claim that there are no choruses. Odysseus' comment seems similarly designed to draw humorous attention to the very presence of Dionysiac elements in the activities of the Cyclops by alleging a distinction between the two. If the Cyclops is a caricature of a Dionysiac figure, this neatly

[229] Noted by Arnott (1972) 22, Seaford (1984) *ad* 708–9, Konstan (1990) 223.
[230] Seaford (2006) 24–5.
[231] Seaford (2006) discusses Dionysiac associations with wine (15–22), communality (26–38), and sexual union (19–20, 29, 64, 88).

emblematizes the drama's playful exploitation of Dionysiac activities: sex, drinking, and dramatic performance.

We shall leave to one side the issue of sexual humour, which has been well studied.[232] But it seems important that wine consumption and metapoetic performance are linked through the intertextual wineskin. Overcoming the brute force of the Cyclops by incapacitating him with wine is a motif obviously borrowed from Homer, but adapted in important ways to stress the metapoetic qualities of Euripides' new fiction. The land of the Cyclopes in Euripides is completely devoid of wine, now called the drink of Dionysus (*Cyc.* 67, 123–4). This is in marked contrast to Homer's equivalent world where grapevines grow spontaneously, without the need of cultivation (*Od.* 9.108–11) and the wine they produce is particularly strong (9.111, 358), although Dionysus himself is notoriously absent as a character in Homeric epic.[233] Various reasons have been proposed to explain why Euripides deprives the Cyclopes of their Homeric vines. Seaford argues that the effect of the wine on Silenus is more amusing due to his forced abstinence, and on Polyphemus due to his complete ignorance, and the innovation is well suited to the satyric genre.[234] Doubtless humour is an important concern. Nevertheless, the innovation seems to be Euripidean, rather than genre-specific. A fragment from the earlier satyr-drama *Cyclops* by Aristias has Polyphemus saying to Odysseus 'you have destroyed the wine by pouring in water' (fr. 4: ἀπώλεσας τὸν οἶνον ἐπιχεάς ὕδωρ), suggesting that Aristias' Cyclops, like Homer's, was used to drinking strong or unmixed wine.[235] For Rossi, the absence of wine correlates with the Cyclops' lack of civilization, so that the introduction of wine leads to a

[232] e.g. Seaford (1984) 38–9, 47–8, 135–9, 197–201, Voelke (2001) 211–59, Harrison (2005) 237–9, Slenders (2005), Hall (2006) 142–69.

[233] Dionysus is mentioned only briefly at *Iliad* 6.132–7, 14.325, *Odyssey* 11.324–5, 24.74.

[234] Seaford (1984) *ad* 121–4.

[235] Rossi (1971) 36 makes a similar point. Callias' comedy *Cyclopes* may have featured uncouth Cyclopes being introduced to 'the finer things in life', but wine is not mentioned in the fragments and reference to bronze-working in fr. 11 'suggests that the Cyclopes may not be the monsters of Homer, but the craftsmen of the gods, who are usually mentioned in the plural' (Storey (2011) i. 155). In a fragment of Epicharmus' comedy *Cyclops* one character asks another to pour something into a cup (fr. 72). Napolitano (2000) 58 assumes that this comes in a wine-pouring scene similar to Euripides' *Cyclops* 566–75, but the term used is σκύφος, which is not normally a wine cup, and refers to a cup used for milk in Euripides' *Cyclops* (390).

comic parody of a failed sympotic revel.[236] It is true that Polyphemus becomes a distorted parody of a symposium participant, but it is also through the 'symposium' scene that the wily Odysseus defeats the Cyclops,[237] and the charge that Polyphemus is uncivilized is problematized by the level of socio-political awareness he displays in other areas. The Cyclops in Euripides is both savage and sophisticated. The care with which he butchers and cooks the humans (*Cyc.* 396–404), for example, is in stark contrast to the Homeric Cyclops who eats the men raw, entrails, bones, and all, like a mountain-bred lion (*Od.* 9.292–3). The manner of consumption has evolved even if the end result is the same. Indeed the cooking process is underlined metapoetically as 'new' when Silenus suggests that consuming such 'new fare' (*ta kaina*) will be pleasant (*Cyc.* 250–1), since 'no other strangers have recently arrived' (*Cyc.* 251–2). The last such strangers were, of course, the Homeric Odysseus and his men, as Hunter observes,[238] so that the 'new fare' for a new Polyphemus stands in direct intertextual contrast to the old fare of the old Polyphemus. In addition to being an accomplished cook, the new Polyphemus is politically sophisticated in a number of ways. He is aware of *polis* life (*Cyc.* 275–6), knows about the Trojan War (*Cyc.* 283–4), and by promoting wealth and individual pleasure above all else (*Cyc.* 316–40), Polyphemus maintains a recognizable, and tyrannical, socio-political position.[239]

[236] Rossi (1971). Napolitano (2000) 57 and (2005) 51 sees Odysseus as a fraudulent symposiarch who instigates a parody of a symposium with Polyphemus as the only drunken symposiast. It is unclear why Napolitano does not include Silenus as a fellow drunken reveller at *Cyc.* 503–89. Halliwell (2008) 128 (cf. 132) also insists that Polyphemus is a solitary symposiast.

[237] Hamilton (1979). Halliwell (2008) 130 observes that 'Polyphemus has been turned into the giant butt of his own symposium'.

[238] Hunter (2009) 60.

[239] Polyphemus' attitude has often been read as promoting a sophistic agenda, a position developed in most detail by Paganelli (1979) 19–60 and which P. O'Sullivan (2005) 119 traces back to Schmid (1896). Several scholars have seen specific parallels between Polyphemus' world-view and that of Callicles, a wealthy aristocrat with oligarchic connections (and hostile to the democracy) who was entering public life in the late 5th cent., and who features in Plato's *Gorgias*, e.g. Duchemin (1945) 118, Seaford (1984) 52–5, Kovacs (1994) 56. However, as O'Sullivan (2005) demonstrates, Callicles was not a sophist and it is tyranny rather than sophism that links the political position of Callicles to that of Polyphemus. Marshall (2005) 113 similarly cautions that the intellectual sophistication of the Cyclops in Euripides does not represent an 'unmediated influence of sophism'. Worman (2008) 121–52 argues that Polyphemus can be read as a 'boastful chef, whose verbal facility matches his mastery in the kitchen' (125), a figure of increasing importance in the development of ancient comedy.

Hunter suggests that the introduction of wine, as the drink of Dionysus, rehabilitates the god within the world of Homer,[240] an observation which brings us circuitously back to the issue of the Dionysiac metapoetics of this drama. Douglas Olson has argued that, by bringing on stage the wine, which is a metaphor for the god Dionysus himself (*Cyc.* 156, 454, 519–26), Odysseus embodies the 'pirate' figure who has captured the god.[241] In Chapter 1, I discussed in some detail how the image of wine in classical Greek poetry commonly functioned as a metaphor for poetry itself, where drinking wine is metaphorical for poetic inspiration. Like wine, springs are also associated with Dionysus (*Cyc.* 66) and can function as metaphors for poetry. In Cratinus' *Wine-flask* (fr. 128) the poet apparently caricatured himself as producing an endless flood of poetry characterized as 'springs' (*pēgai*). Pindar seems to refer to his own poetry as nectar from a 'spring' (*krana*) in a fragment from the Partheneion *Daphnephorikon for Agasikles of Thebes* (fr. 94b.76–8),[242] and he associates songs with rushing water in his fragmentary Paean *For the Delphians to Pytho* (fr. 52f.127–9). Springs and rushing water, as opposed to stagnant water, such as lakes or pools, for example, are metaphors for poetry because poetry is ever-evolving, and new poetry is ever moving away from its source while remaining connected to it. Euripides exploits both wine and spring metaphors simultaneously in *Cyclops*, in a concretized way, through Odysseus' Homeric 'wineskin', the pleasurable 'spring' (*Cyc.* 148: *krēnē*) introduced into the narrative. A probable lacuna after 146 leaves some details unclear, and it has been suggested that we are missing two lines describing the magic self-replenishing qualities of the wineskin.[243] The extant text refers to 'twice as much drink as flows from the wineskin' (*Cyc.* 147: δὶς τόσον πῶμ' ὅσον ἂν ἐξ ἀσκοῦ ῥυῇ), which may point to the potential of the wineskin for double replenishing, or may refer to a dilution with two parts of water, though this would not significantly affect the wine's potency or volume, and the former meaning seems more likely.[244]

[240] Hunter (2009) 66. [241] Olson (1988).

[242] See Nünlist (1998) 193.

[243] See Ussher (1978) *ad* 146–7, Seaford (1984) *ad* 147, and cf. Biehl (1986) *ad* 145 ff. Kovacs (1994) 76–7 conjectures two supplemental lines, though he admits (n. 7) that these are 'mere guesses'.

[244] Seaford (1984) *ad* 147 summarizes the arguments. Duchemin (1945) 81–2 observes that doubling the amount of wine in the wineskin (by dilution) would hardly evoke Silenus' exclamatory description of a beautiful spring.

Euripides' wineskin, as in the *Odyssey*, was given to Odysseus by Maron. In Homer, Maron is son of Euanthes, a priest of Apollo (*Od.* 9. 197–8), but Euripides appropriates Hesiodic genealogy in making Maron the son of Dionysus (*Cyc.* 141–3; cf. Hesiod fr. 238 MW = fr. 180 Most). The poetic associations of Apollo as patron of bardic song and Dionysus as patron of dramatic song fit well with the respective poetic contexts of each world. It is clear in both cases that the wine of Maron has a special potency. Even in Homer, where the Cyclopes have abundant and strong wine, three cups of Maron's wine are enough to put Polyphemus to sleep (*Od.* 9.360–74), but the characterization of the wine as a 'spring' in Euripides is new. Given the overt intertextual engagement with an earlier poetic source, and the common literary association of wine and springs with poetry, there is reasonable cause to pursue some metaphorical implications. By *introducing* his 'wine' to the newly wine-less Cyclopes, Euripides metaphorically imposes his own poetic spin on an old story. The image stresses the importance both of the poetic source and of the new interpretation (it is both new and old). As such it works as a metaphor also for the very concept of intertextuality. Odysseus' reference to δὶς τόσον πῶμ' 'twice as much drink' (*Cyc.* 147) may itself be an intertextual allusion to Hecuba's wish to die with her daughter at the grave of Achilles so that his corpse and the earth might have 'twice as much drink' in *Hecuba* (392: δὶς τόσον πῶμ'). The 'drink' in question here is blood rather than wine, but in both cases the double 'drink' is associated with danger, and it is striking that the same expression had been used by Euripides in this play where doubling is such an important metapoetic motif. Several scholars have seen parallels between *Hecuba*'s Polymestor and Polyphemus where Polymestor functions as a Cyclops figure, a savage who is blinded for his crime but who also correctly prophesies the doom of his attacker.[245] Whether or not *Cyclops* alludes to *Hecuba*, there are several episodes in *Cyclops* which lend themselves to a metapoetic reading in connecting wine consumption with poetic inspiration. Silenus, well acquainted with wine, is presented as the

[245] C. Segal (1993) 162–3, 185–7, Thalmann (1993) 127, Zeitlin (1996) 195–7; Sutton (1974*a*) 175–6 and (1980) 108–20 argues that *Cyclops* was the satyr-drama accompanying *Hecuba*, based on these similarities, but Seaford (1982) provides detailed analysis of metrical and other criteria which demonstrates that *Cyclops* was not at all likely to have been produced as early as the 420s BC.

caricature of a failed poet. He asks Odysseus to pour him some wine 'so that [he] can remember drinking' (*Cyc.* 152: ὡς ἀναμνησθῶ πιών). Memory, of course, is 'mother Muse's worker', to quote *Prometheus Bound* (460–1), and is what the poet and the actor rely on for their performance. The fact that drinking the wine will awaken memory is clearly analogous to the inspiration of the intoxicated poet. In Silenus' case the memory awakened is that of drinking wine, thus creating a circuitous pattern of intoxication and memory which produces a performance in a metapoetic sense since the wine makes him dance on stage (*Cyc.* 156), and he is, of course, performing poetry. At the same time Silenus becomes overly intoxicated as is appropriate to his satyric persona.

When Silenus overdoes it, he becomes unable to control his poetic predicament. He wants to escape with Odysseus but his excessive intake of wine has made him weak (*Cyc.* 432–4) and 'caught on the wine-cup as if on birdlime he fretfully flaps his wings' (*Cyc.* 433–4: ὥσπερ πρὸς ἰξῷ τῇ κύλικι λελημμένος | πτέρυγας ἀλύει). The metaphor of the drunken Silenus as a trapped bird is significant for our metapoetic reading. The image of birdlime is unusual, but Euripides elsewhere explicitly compares poetic song to that of birds. In *Heracles*, the chorus members twice compare themselves to poets singing like swans (110–11, 691–4), and the lyric mourning of Amphitryon is compared proleptically to that of a wingless bird (1039). Similarly, the chorus of *Iphigenia among the Taurians* (1089–95) is a wingless bird lamenting like a halcyon, the mythical bird normally identified with the kingfisher,[246] and Electra in *Electra* (151–6) compares her lament to that of a singing swan. Hecuba's lamentation in *Trojan Women* is that of a mother bird (146–7), the chorus of *Helen* names the nightingale as the most skilled in poetic song (1109–10), and Antigone in *Phoenician Women* (1515–18) asks what bird will sing in accompaniment with her. In fact, poets and poetic song were so frequently personified as birds and birdsong in ancient Greek poetry that Wright remarks in relation to Euripides' *Heracles*: 'the metaphorical language of . . . birdsong is so common as to seem almost clichéd'.[247] If the

[246] See Platnauer (1938) *ad* 1090 and Cropp (2000) *ad* 1089–95.

[247] Wright (2010) 173 with n. 45. Nünlist (1998) 39–63 gathers numerous examples of poets compared to song-birds, eagles, and bees in early Greek lyric and epic poetry. Taillardat (1965) 430–3 discusses images of poets as birds or bees in Aristophanes.

metaphor of birdsong is clichéd, and the metaphor of wine consumption as poetic inspiration is so common (as was discussed in Chapter 1), then the image of a bird trapped and flapping its wings on a wine cup after excessive intoxication is a clever twist on these hackneyed images, casting Silenus as a metaphorical caricature of a failed poet. Indeed, if dramatic 'poetry' is a *poiēsis*, a 'creation' of some sort, then the passivity of Silenus, underlined by the insinuation that he will be sexually passive to Polyphemus,[248] suggests that he is the antithesis of a creator or instigator. The actively scheming Odysseus, by contrast, calls himself and (presumably) his companions 'master builders' (*Cyc.* 477: ἀρχιτέκτοσιν), whom the chorus must obey. In fact the plural may well refer to Odysseus alone, in the manner of tragic parallels where plurals can refer to a single (and specific) person.[249] Seaford comments that 'the word is somewhat surprising in this context', and suggests that the oddity of language may be linked to a comic or satyric topos involving a collective task.[250] This may be the case, but the builder is another well-known metaphor for the poet. It is attested in Pindar (*Nemean* 3.4, *Pythian* 3.113–14), exploited in comedy (Pherecrates, *Small Fry* (*Krapataloi*) fr. 100, Cratinus *Eumenides* fr. 70 = Aristophanes, *Knights* 529–30, *Frogs* 820, 1004, *Peace* 749–50), and features in Sophocles' *Daedalus*, where reference is made to a 'master-building muse' (fr. 159: τεκτόναρχος μοῦσα), in a play which may have been a satyr-drama.[251] The unusual language, then, casts Odysseus as a successful poetic builder while Silenus is floundering on the birdlime.

Moreover, like Silenus, the intoxicated Cyclops can also be understood as a caricature of an inept poetic figure. The wine makes Polyphemus sing (*Cyc.* 423: πρὸς ᾠδὰς εἶρπ') but his songs are 'without a Muse' (*Cyc.* 425–6: ᾄδει . . . ἄμουσ'), he is 'making a graceless song as music for himself' (*Cyc.* 489: ἄχαριν κέλαδον μουσιζόμενος),[252] and is

[248] Polyphemus' rape of Silenus is implied (*Cyc.* 585–9) but never made explicit, although Fletcher (2005) argues that the rape is divine punishment for Silenus' perjury earlier in the play.

[249] Biehl (1986) 172 refers us to *Hec.* 1237 and *Tro.* 404.

[250] Seaford (1984) *ad* 477.

[251] See Radt (1999) 171–3 and Krumeich, Pechstein, and Seidensticker (1999) 389–90.

[252] Seaford (1984) *ad* 489 notes that the verb, which I have translated as 'making music for himself' is rare, and unique in the middle form. Paley (1880) iii. 591, comments '[i]n μουσίζεσθαι, a word formed on epic analogy . . . there is the same

'out of tune' (*Cyc.* 490: ἀπῳδός). He is σκαιός 'on the wrong track' (*Cyc.* 490). The Cyclops' inability to sing in tune suggests an ineptitude correlative to his ignorance of wine and his excessive alcohol consumption. As the Cyclops continues to drink the potent wine, he describes a comic parody of the Greek poetic account of the world's origins. He thinks he sees *ouranos* 'sky' being mingled (συμμεμειγμένος) with *gē* 'earth' (*Cyc.* 578–9), using a verb suggestive of sexual intercourse (LSJ s.v. συμμείγνυμι I.2). He is dizzy, of course, from the wine, but the image strongly recalls the coupling of Ouranos and Gaia described in Hesiod's *Theogony* (126–46) as producing the Titans, and indeed the elder Cyclopes themselves. The Cyclops then claims to see the throne of Zeus and the whole revered company of gods (*Cyc.* 579–80), representatives of the divine generation who famously overthrew the Titans in a war referred to by Silenus in the prologue (*Cyc.* 5). In a further metapoetic joke, the Cyclops sees the 'Graces' (ostensibly the satyrs) trying to seduce him (*Cyc.* 581), but he opts instead to go to bed with 'Ganymede' (i.e. Silenus, *Cyc.* 582–3). In keeping with the comical representation of his ignorance of wine and poetry, Polyphemus refuses to be seduced by 'poetic' Muses when he rejects the 'Graces' since the Graces are explicitly associated with the Muses in Greek poetry.[253] Instead, he makes off with 'Ganymede' in a ridiculous parody of Ganymede's abduction by the gods to serve as Zeus' wine-pourer because of his beauty (*Iliad* 20.232–5). The mythopoetic confusion induced by Polyphemus' excessive wine intake thus confirms the metaphor of wine consumption as mythopoetic inspiration, in a humorous manner.

Euripides' *Cyclops* plays with metapoetic images throughout its performance, and this game is framed by metapoetic challenges posed to the audience in both opening and closing scenes. In his prologue speech, Silenus lists the labours he has performed for Dionysus: taking care of him when he was driven mad by Hera, protecting him during the Gigantomachy and killing Enceladus on his behalf (*Cyc.* 3–8). Silenus then breaks off suddenly saying 'Come, let me see, am I telling a dream I had?' (*Cyc.* 8: φέρ' ἴδω, τοῦτ' ἰδὼν ὄναρ λέγω); Seaford remarks that Silenus' boasts seem highly unlikely. He is

disparaging estimate of his musical powers; "doing the musical" one might say.' Biehl (1986) 176 notes that the phrase is an oxymoron.

[253] Cf. e.g. Hesiod, *Theogony* 64 with West (1966) *ad loc.*, Pindar *Olympian* 14.1–12, Eur. *Her.* 673–4 with Bond (1981) *ad* 673.

typically lazy and never engages in serious combat, and the traditional versions of the Gigantomachy and the death of Enceladus at Athena's hands would have been known to the audience from other sources.[254] The mention of the dream is clearly a cue for us to question, with Silenus, the validity of this narrative account.[255] Silenus rejects the notion of a dream as soon as he has raised it with an assertory oath claiming to have displayed his trophies to Bacchus (*Cyc.* 9). Nevertheless, questions of mythological accuracy, and of comic variations on poetic sources, have been raised by this important aside. Silenus effectively draws the audience's attention to the fictional potential of poetic narrative.

Just as the opening scene provokes a metafictional awareness in the audience, so too does the drama's conclusion, albeit in a different manner. The Homeric paradigm is acknowledged by Odysseus' revelation of his true name and the Cyclops' recognition of the fulfilment of an ancient oracle he had received (*Cyc.* 696, *Od.* 9. 507) concerning his blinding by Odysseus. Nevertheless, the episode is marked as *kainos*. When Odysseus reveals his name, the Cyclops responds: 'you have changed your name and are saying something new (*kainon*)' (*Cyc.* 691: ὄνομα μεταβαλὼν καινὸν λέγεις). The revelation of the name is not new in itself, and dramatic convention can be used to explain why Odysseus is still on stage and not on his ship when he taunts the Cyclops with his true identity. What *is* new about the episode is that the Cyclops connects the 'new' name *only* to the prophecy into which Odysseus' fate of wandering on the sea is subsumed. The curse elicited from Poseidon by Polyphemus in Homer is dispensed with entirely. This suits the new Polyphemus, who has no interest in his father or in the other gods, but *Cyclops* ends remarkably abruptly with Polyphemus announcing his intention to break a boulder from the hilltop to hurl at Odysseus and his companions and crush them to pieces (*Cyc.* 704–6). He exits into his cave, imagined as a tunnel (*Cyc.* 707), and the chorus declare that they will leave with Odysseus and will serve Dionysus in the future (*Cyc.* 708–9). Hunter notes that this final utterance has a self-conscious tone, essentially promising the performance of more satyr-dramas in

[254] Seaford (1984) *ad* 1, 5–9, 7, 8, cf. Ussher (1978) *ad* 5–8, Biehl (1986) *ad* 7 f.

[255] Cf. Wright (2006*a*) 39. Napolitano (2005) 43 observes the breach of dramatic illusion in this passage.

the future,[256] but the story of Odysseus and the Cyclops is left strangely unresolved.

Cyclops may have been an unusually short satyr-drama. In his discussion of Aeschylus' *Net-Haulers* (*Diktyoulkoi*), Sommerstein notes that fr. 47a is marked as the 800th line of the play, and, given that the action has not reached its conclusion, the drama must have been around the same length as a typical tragedy.[257] *Cyclops* is only 709 lines long (just half the length of many tragedies) and the abrupt and open-ended conclusion may have to do with the fact that the audience can now fill in the blanks. Does Odysseus escape before Polyphemus can get to his boulders? This seems unlikely.[258] Does the Cyclops twice come perilously close to hitting Odysseus' ship as in the *Odyssey* (9.480–6, 537–42)? Seaford is certain that hurling the boulders 'cannot be done on the stage'.[259] But surely, if Evadne can throw herself from the roof of the *skēnē* onto her husband's funeral pyre below in full view of the audience in Euripides' *Suppliants* (1069–72), throwing some kind of make-shift boulders from the *skēnē* roof would have been an easy theatrical feat to accomplish, and Polyphemus blindly taking aim at the escaping Odysseus would provide a humorous visual conclusion, as the actor made his exit hastily along one of the *eisodoi*.[260] In a sense, what happens to Odysseus does not matter as much as the anticipated reunion of the satyrs with Dionysus, but the *exodos* remains remarkably condensed. In the context of Euripidean drama the conclusion to *Trojan Women* provides the closest parallel for this lack of closure.[261] It seems important that *Trojan Women* also invites us throughout to fill in the blanks with our poetic knowledge, as was discussed above. In *Cyclops* too, there are proleptic clues that we should do the same.

When Odysseus exploits the Homeric simile comparing the boring of the Cyclops' eye to a ship's joiner whirling his drill with a pair of

[256] Hunter (2009) 57. [257] Sommerstein (2008) iii. 43.

[258] *Pace* Ussher (1978) 193, who assumes that 'Odysseus and his party leave unhindered.'

[259] Seaford (1984) *ad* 706–7.

[260] This would replicate the sense of 'a game of blind man's buff' referred to by Halliwell (2008) 129 in the context of Polyphemus' humiliation earlier in the play (*Cyc.* 675–89).

[261] Ussher (1978) *ad* 708–9 observes that *Cyclops* ends abruptly, giving only *Trojan Women* as an example to support his claim that '[s]uch terse final comments are common in Euripides.' In fact these two plays are anomalous in terms of Euripidean closure.

thongs (*Cyc.* 460–3, cf. *Od.* 9.382–6), the passage is striking and incongruous for a number of reasons. Seaford observes that the comparison is better suited to a narrative than to the explanation of a plan of action.[262] Moreover, in *Cyclops* the simile is used in reference to a future action, whereas in Homer the simile describes the process as it occurs. Hunter notes that similes referring to future events are extremely rare, and that the simile in Euripides suggests that we know this will happen, reinforcing the sense that 'we have read "the script"'.[263] To this category of events, we can add Odysseus' appeal to Athena for aid. As Polyphemus declares his indifference to the gods, Odysseus grows alarmed and exclaims: 'O Pallas Athena, O lady, divine daughter of Zeus—now, now, help me!' (*Cyc.* 350: *ὦ Παλλάς, ὦ δέσποινα Διογενὲς θεά,* | *νῦννῦν ἄρηξον*). The invocation prompts an audience to consider when and where Athena helps Odysseus in Homer. She certainly does not come to his aid in the Homeric cave of Polyphemus. Odysseus' brief consideration there of how Athena might give him the glory of punishing the Cyclops (*Odyssey* 9.317) hardly compares to the many instances in which she appears in person or interferes directly to guide the course of events in the *Odyssey*. Will Athena *now* (cf. *νῦννῦν* 'now, now') come to Odysseus' rescue and appear *ex machina*? Euripides teases the audience with the suggestion that she might, but, in this regard, ultimately the drama conforms to the expected Homeric pattern. Returning, then, to the issue of Polyphemus hurling boulders at Odysseus, we can see that this predictable outcome is also anticipated. When Silenus betrays Odysseus and his men to the Cyclops, he alleges that they plan 'to hand him over to prise up boulders for (but also 'against') someone' (*Cyc.* 239–40: *ἀποδώσειν τινὶ* | *πέτρους μοχλεύειν*). The expression seems to be a self-conscious and comical allusion to Homeric events where Odysseus is the *tis* 'someone', or rather the *outis* 'no one', against whom we know Polyphemus hurls boulders (*Od.* 9.484, 541). When the Cyclops threatens to fulfil his pre-scripted role by crushing Odysseus and his men with a boulder (*Cyc.* 704–5), we are clearly expected to fill in the blanks and assume that Odysseus escapes but suffers many hardships on the sea.[264]

[262] Seaford (1984) *ad* 460–1. [263] Hunter (2009) 59.

[264] Hamilton (1979) 292 gives no explanation for his claim that 'Odysseus has already endured the prophesied dangers'. In fact the prophecy had stated that

The implication may have had a contemporary political resonance in the late fifth century BC since Euripides sets his Cyclops story not in Homer's vague and unidentifiable location, but in Sicily, a fact that is stressed repeatedly (*Cyc.* 20, 62, 95, 106, 114, 130, 298, 366, 395, 599, 660, 703).[265] Euripides might not have invented the association, since Thucydides imagines that the Cyclopes (along with the Laestrygonians) were early inhabitants of Sicily (6.2).[266] Still, whether the drama was performed in 412 BC[267] or in 408 BC,[268] the disastrous Athenian expedition to Sicily of 415–413 BC during which Athens suffered serious losses to its navy cannot have been far from the minds of the audience.[269] Indeed it is suggestive that Thucydides makes the connection between the Cyclopes and Sicily at the beginning of his treatment of this very episode.[270] In Homer, Odysseus lies to the Cyclops claiming that Poseidon shattered his vessel on the coastal rocks, and that he and his men are destitute (*Od.* 9.281–6). In fact, the land of the Cyclopes is the only location into which Odysseus purposely chooses to go during his Homeric adventure. He is not blown there by chance, but actively decides to explore the area, although he and his men have abundant provisions of food on the goat-inhabited island near by (*Od.* 9.116–24, 161–5). It is made clear that Odysseus is reckless in his decision. He fully anticipates that he will meet a powerful and lawless race (*Od.* 9.213–15) and yet twice he acts against the wishes of his crew (*Od.* 9.224–9, 491–505), both times putting their lives in perilous situations. It is poetic justice that Odysseus' lie about his shipwreck becomes a reality after the Homeric Polyphemus invokes Poseidon's curse on him. In Euripides these moments of the story are left blank. Odysseus claims to have been

Odysseus *would* (in the future) suffer the penalty for his crime against the Cyclops by drifting on the sea for a long time (*Cyc.* 698–700), as he does in the *Odyssey*.

[265] The frequency of references to Sicily is noticed by Ussher (1978) 194, Paganelli (1979) 116 with n. 6, Seaford (1984) 55.

[266] Noted by Ussher (1978) 178 n. 51, Seaford (1984) *ad* 20, Biehl (1986) *ad* 21 f.

[267] Wright (2006*a*) 23–7.

[268] Seaford (1984) 48–51.

[269] Harrison (2005) 250 refers to different Athenian concerns—the Spartan garrison's presence at Decelea in 408 and the oligarchic coup of 411—but is non-committal on whether *Cyclops* has a 'happy ending . . . or . . . a darker close'.

[270] We have no idea whether the Sicilian comic poet Epicharmus set his *Cyclops* comedy in Sicily or made any such connection. Any suggestion that he or Cratinus placed their Cyclopes in Sicily before Euripides did is pure conjecture, as well noted by Paganelli (1979) 115–16.

driven to Sicily by the force of storms (*Cyc.* 109, 279), but we might well be expected to remember that in Homer this was a lie, since we have just been reminded that Odysseus is 'a fierce prattler' (*Cyc.* 104: *κρόταλον δριμύ*). Certainly, as Seaford notes, the suggestion of Greeks trapped in Sicily where they are threatened with destruction could easily have reminded the Athenian audience of their troubles with the Sicilian expedition, where many Greeks were trapped in the quarries of Sicily.[271]

The metapoetic games played out in *Cyclops* serve several functions. Silenus and Polyphemus perform ridiculous parodies of Dionysiac ritual, sexual, alcoholic, and poetic, while Odysseus essentially conforms to his Homeric role. The effect is primarily humorous. Nevertheless, the extreme level of intertextuality with Homer suggests the repetition of mythic history, a parodic counterpart to the sense of repeated history we traced in *Trojan Women*. In *Cyclops*, an arrogant Greek ventures into a territory where he is poorly equipped to deal with the threats he faces. Before he can escape he loses some of his men and the crime he commits ensures he will be punished with sufferings at sea. For an Athenian audience, a serious issue is thinly veiled under the surface of the metapoetic jokes. *Cyclops*' intertextual relationship with Homer suggests that the paradigm of naval commanders leading their men into perilous situations is an old one. The story has been 'modernized' by making the 'enemy' more politically sophisticated and by excluding any direct interference of the gods, but these innovations only demonstrate that, in spite of political and theological developments, social problems remain the same. The use of the Homeric source is so overt that it encourages the kind of collective audience response typical of satyr-drama. No one who knows *Odyssey* 9 could fail to get the obvious comical allusions, and yet the emphatic references to Sicily suggest the possibility of an additional type of collective audience response. The audience is invited to recognize the foolish nature of the recent Athenian enterprise against Sicily, a campaign based on material greed (Thuc. 6.8), against an enemy who would prove difficult to control, even if conquered (Thuc. 6.11), and launched at a time when Athens was finally feeling some relief from losses of manpower and financial resources (Thuc. 6.12). Mark Griffith has shown that, in the context

[271] Seaford (1982) 172 and (1984) 55; cf. Paganelli (1979) 115–25, Worman (2008) 122.

of satyr-drama's potential for political self-presentation, notions of 'self-improvement and self-indulgence' were 'deliciously mixed'.[272] The metapoetic agenda of Euripides' *Cyclops* contributes to this dual function of satyr-drama.

HOMER, AESCHYLUS, SOPHOCLES

This chapter has further developed our insights into Euripides' deep intertextual relationship and metapoetic engagement with Homer and the Cyclic epics (throughout his Trojan War plays) and with Aeschylus (in *Philoctetes*), while also revealing Euripides' responses to his older living contemporary Sophocles, most obviously in *Andromache* and *Hecuba*, but also in *Alexandros*. Euripides consistently seeks to rival previous tragedies, often embedding allusions to epic authority in his novel reconfigurations. The satyr-drama *Cyclops*, uniquely, rivals an epic paradigm while simultaneously appealing to its authority. It is possible that Sophocles influenced Euripides in other lost Trojan War tragedies. Both tragedians wrote a *Scyrians*, for example, dealing with the recruitment of Achilles from Scyros in the case of Euripides, and of Neoptolemus from the same place in the case of Sophocles. All three tragedians wrote *Telephus* tragedies on the subject of how the Mysian Telephus sought healing from the camp of his enemies Agamemnon and Achilles, after the oracle of Apollo proclaimed that his festering wound could only be healed by the one who had inflicted it (i.e. Achilles). It is likely that Telephus took Agamemnon's infant son Orestes with him to supplicate the Greeks more effectively in the Aeschylean version,[273] and that Euripides added the threat of violence to the child, as parodied in Aristophanes' *Women at the Thesmophoria* (466–764). Unfortunately, evidence for Aeschylus' *Telephus* is scant, and we know virtually nothing about the *Telephus* of Sophocles, but there must have been metapoetic interaction similar to the kind traced in this chapter in a variety of lost Euripidean plays.

Drawing attention to novelty, to poetic skill, or to dramatic spectacle is an important function of Euripides' metapoetic agenda, and

[272] Griffith (2005) 178.
[273] Csapo (1990), Preiser (2000) 51–9.

his Trojan War dramas have social or political implications which are set into sharper relief because of their absence from earlier sources and their emphatic novelty. The social status of a childless wife can be threatened by the son of a prisoner of war (*Andromache*). Murder and revenge debase both victims and avengers (*Hecuba*). Presenting the perspective of enemy Trojans is novel in relation to specifically evoked poetic predecessors (*Philoctetes* and *Trojan Women*), and the actions and sufferings of the dramatic characters can prompt reflection on contemporary political Athenian events (*Trojan Women*, *Cyclops*).

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5

Tragedy, Comedy, and Euripides

This book has drawn attention to the multifarious metapoetic techniques employed by Euripides, including intertextual engagement with Homer, Aeschylus, and Sophocles, through *ekphrasis*, textual allusions, and (in some cases) visual echoes of earlier performances, metapoetic references to written texts and mythical innovations, and exploitation of self-conscious trigger words relating to novelty and posteriority, often within new social, theological, or political parameters. We have observed at several points in our discussion how such techniques distinguish Euripides from Aeschylus and Sophocles. For example, Euripides is the only tragedian to use the metatragic term *metabolē* (Ch. 1); he exploits *ekphrasis* much more frequently than do Aeschylus and Sophocles, and his *ekphraseis* tend to be intertextual and marked by the terminology of symbols (Ch. 2); writing in his tragedies is associated not with the metaphor of memory, as commonly in Aeschylus and Sophocles, but with successful authorial control (Ch. 3); the metapoetically loaded term *mousa* and cognates feature far more significantly in Euripides than in the other two tragedians (Ch. 4, n. 196). Nevertheless, it is not the case that metapoetic elements are entirely absent from the plays of Aeschylus and Sophocles. In this final chapter I discuss some examples of metapoetry in the other tragedians and in old comedy, and I put forward two interrelated arguments. I show that in its pervasiveness and in relation to concepts of novelty, metapoetry in Euripides is similar to the techniques employed by the old comedians. This explains, I suggest, the 'comic' tone that has so often been detected in Euripides by scholars,[1] but I argue that this tone is more properly 'metapoetic'

[1] Cf. e.g. Kitto (1966) 311–69, Knox (1979) 250–73, Seidensticker (1982), Michelini (1987) 66–7, E. Segal (1995), Walton (2010) 62–78.

because Euripidean metapoetry is in keeping with the conventions of the tragic genre. It is the pervasiveness of metapoetry, rather than some allusive sense of 'comedy' or 'tragicomedy', which, I argue, gives Euripidean drama its particularly distinctive tone.

METAPOETRY IN TRAGEDY AND SATYR-DRAMA

Scholars of ancient Greek drama do not doubt that intertextuality and metatheatre are present in old comedy, which contains numerous quotations from tragedy and explicitly breaks the theatrical illusion by (for example) addressing the audience directly or by referring openly to costume changes and theatrical machinery.[2] I have argued throughout this study that intertextuality, metatheatre, and other types of metapoetic devices are employed *implicitly* by Euripides in his tragedies on a regular basis. The dramatic illusion is maintained because the metapoetic strategies used allow for two levels of meaning, making sense within the fiction but also serving as markers of artificiality. One can usefully call the process a '*collusion*' between the play and the audience, as does Pat Easterling in her survey of how Greek tragedy reminds its audience of their role as spectators.[3] Euripides' *Trojan Women* receives the most sustained discussion in Easterling's treatment, but she also draws attention to important examples of metatheatricality in Aeschylus and Sophocles, emphasizing that the practice is not exclusively Euripidean.[4] In Aeschylus' *Agamemnon*, for example, the Watchman is alone when he concludes his ominous prologue saying that he speaks to those who understand and forgets those who do not (*Ag.* 39). As Easterling remarks, 'there is no one present to "understand" except those members of the audience who can guess from their knowledge of earlier poetry what he is

[2] See e.g. Bakola (2010) on Cratinus and tragedy (118–79) and on metatheatre in Cratinus (13–80); Olson (2007) 151–86 on Greek comedy's reception of earlier poetry; Pucci (1961), Rau (1967), Silk (1993), Dobrov (2001) 37–50 on Aristophanes' use of tragedy; Dobrov (2001) 89–156 and Slater (2002*a*) on metatheatre in Aristophanes. Taplin (1986) 164 comments that 'Old Comedy is ubiquitously self-referential' and Taplin (1993) 67–78 links comic metatheatre to images on vase paintings.

[3] Easterling (1997*b*) 167, Easterling's italics.

[4] Easterling (1997*b*) 168.

talking about'.[5] In a different kind of example, Athena's address to the 'Attic people' in *Eumenides* (681) can trigger audience recognition of their own participation in Attic rituals.[6] Athena is addressing the jurors at Orestes' trial within the drama, but she also addresses future Athenian citizens (*Eum.* 683, 708) of the kind present in the audience. In addition, the self-referential qualities of the chorus of *Eumenides* have been well discussed by Henrichs, in an important article on choral self-referentiality in Greek tragedy, which briefly addresses Euripides but (interestingly) has far more to say about Sophocles.[7]

Sophocles' lost *Thamyras* may well have been particularly rich in metatheatrical reference to music and song. The title character was blinded by the Muses and deprived of his skill in song and lyre-playing after he boasted that he could outdo them in a singing contest (*Iliad* 2.594–600). Most of the fragments refer to musical instruments, songs, or dancing (frr. 238, 240, 241, 244, 245), and the *Life of Sophocles* reports that Sophocles himself played the title role, suggesting that this play was produced early in his career since his weak voice meant that he had to retire from acting.[8] Mark Ringer's study of metatheatre and role-playing in Sophocles focuses on the extant plays. Experts in Greek tragedy and in Sophocles found his book problematic in their reviews, most consistently because of the vague parameters of 'metatheatricality' assumed by Ringer, which included any elements of deception or tensions between illusion and reality, so that any point at which a character deceives another, or is deceived, seems to qualify as an instance of metatheatricality.[9] Deceit certainly *can* be metatheatrical, as in the False Merchant scene in Sophocles' *Philoctetes*, analysed by Pat Easterling as 'a deception scene within a deception scene' which 'makes complex contact with the audience',[10] but I must agree with reviewers in finding Ringer's own position on the relationship between deceit and metatheatricality nebulous and unsatisfactory. Krummen puts her finger on the main problem when she observes that, according to Ringer's assumptions, 'the structures and relations created by the interpreter according to the tenets of

[5] Easterling (1997*b*) 167.

[6] Easterling (1997*b*) 167–8 *pace* Taplin (1986) 166. Bain (1975), like Taplin, was not convinced that audience address occurred in tragedy.

[7] Henrichs (1995) discusses Aeschylus' *Eumenides* (60–5), Sophocles (65–85), and Euripides (86–90).

[8] See Sutton (1984) 139–41, Lloyd-Jones (2003) 102–5, Radt (2009) 234–8.

[9] See e.g. Budelmann (1999), Krummen (1999), Lardinois (2001).

[10] Easterling (1997*b*) 169.

"metatheater" are used to give the plays their content, while the plays themselves in their own messages, images, and actions take on the aspect of second plays'.[11] In other words, Ringer sees role-playing itself as metatheatrical which is inherently problematic since, where 'role-playing' simply amounts to 'acting', there is nothing 'meta' about its theatricality. Thomas Rosenmeyer has commented on this issue, in general terms, in his essay on the 'overload' of metatheatre in some scholarship: 'role-playing, that is, enacting a role within a role, is as old as the simulation of faithful wifehood by Clytemnestra in Aeschylus' *Agamemnon*, and yields no metatheatrical dividends'.[12]

Nevertheless, Ringer's work is not without its insights, and his suggestions regarding the potential metatheatrical impact of the three-actor rule, where each actor can play multiple roles, are thought-provoking in some cases. Krummen protests that actors were praised in antiquity for their abilities to adjust their voices according to their character, and that we have no evidence for an audience recognizing the voice of the same actor in different roles.[13] She has a valid point, especially where Ringer assumes that the male actor switches between male and female roles, given the evidence for the increasing specialization of ancient actors to specific roles.[14] Still, it is interesting, for example, that the same actor plays both Odysseus and the False Merchant in Sophocles' *Philoctetes*.[15] In this scene, already a deception within a deception, recognition of the fact that the actor playing the False Merchant had also played Odysseus adds an extra dimension of metatheatrical intensity to the deception. A further compelling example is Ringer's argument that the protagonist in Sophocles' *Ajax* plays the title-character until his suicide, and then plays Ajax's half-brother Teucer.[16] This would reinforce the sense that Teucer serves as a doublet for his brother in defending his interests after his death, marked with metatheatrical irony by Teucer's statement on viewing Ajax's body: 'now that I see him, I am destroyed' (*Ajax* 1001: *νῦν δ' ὁρῶν ἀπόλλυμαι*).[17] Gregory Dobrov also draws attention to self-

[11] Krummen (1999). [12] T. Rosenmeyer (2002) 104.

[13] Krummen (1999) with n. 5.

[14] Hall (2002) 5–18, Green (2002); much of our evidence concerning ancient actors dates from the 4th cent. BC and later, but tragic language was clearly and identifiably gendered as Mossman (2001) shows, for example, in the case of Euripides' *Electra*.

[15] Ringer (1998) 122, cf. Easterling (1997*b*) 169.

[16] Also suggested by Garvie (1998) 17 as the likeliest distribution of parts.

[17] Ringer (1998) 47; his claim, however, that Teucer's exclamation *ἰώ μοί μοι* 'Woe! Woe is me!' (*Ajax* 974) links him verbally to his brother's earlier *ἰώ μοί μοι*

conscious aspects of *Ajax*, as, for example, when Ajax concludes his suicide speech saying 'I'll tell the rest of the story (*muthēsomai*) to those in Hades below' (*Ajax* 865), thus rewriting 'one of the most memorable encounters' from Homer's *Odyssey* (11.543–67) where Odysseus visits Hades and Ajax refuses to speak to him.[18]

Intertextual allusion is a feature of all Greek tragedy, to a greater or lesser extent.[19] A recent study of Aeschylus' *Agamemnon* by Eleni Gasti puts forward some radical arguments relating to poetic self-consciousness in Aeschylus. In addition to stressing the 'dynamic use of Homeric intertexts' in *Agamemnon*, Gasti detects oblique metapoetic potential in terms like *charis* (in reference to the divine origin of poetic creativity), *praxis* (in reference to plot), and *telos* (in reference to the narrative's end). Cassandra's prophetic madness is read by Gasti as 'a powerful image of poetic inspiration', while Clytemnestra is understood to be 'a metatheatrical figure . . . who plays a role within a role'.[20] Rosenmeyer (quoted above), for one, would doubtless disagree with the last argument, at least, but Aeschylus' earliest surviving play, *Persians*, provides an incontrovertible example of metapoetic intertextuality, which is far from oblique. Garvie observes that the opening line of *Persians* 'is a translation into anapaestic metre of the opening line of Phrynichus' play', namely *Phoenician Women*, which, like Aeschylus' *Persians*, had dealt with the Battle of Salamis.[21] Easterling has commented that the scene in Aeschylus was 'evidently designed to recall [Phrynichus'] play' in appealing to the audience's 'recent theatrical experience'.[22] The hypothesis to *Persians* records that Glaucus (probably the late fifth-century writer Glaucus of Rhegium) considered Aeschylus's play to have been adapted from that of

'Woe! Woe is me!' at *Ajax* 333 (which also occurs, incidentally, at 336 and 385) is undermined by Tecmessa's intervening repetitions of the same expression (at *Ajax* 891, 936, 939), which Ringer does not seem to have noticed. Garvie (1998) 215–16 (cf. *ad* 974) observes that 'Teucer's expressions of grief unite him with Tecmessa'.

[18] Dobrov (2001) 57. Dobrov's overall approach, however, can be problematic in ways similar to that of Ringer (1998), discussed above, since Dobrov tends to read illusion (or delusion) within the drama per se as an example of *mise en abîme*.

[19] Garner (1990), Easterling (1993) 567, Burian (1997) 190–6, Wright (2010).

[20] Gasti (2009) 128. I am grateful indeed to Professor Gasti for sending me a copy of her book, which I might not otherwise have encountered.

[21] Garvie (2009) 50. Sommerstein (2008) i. 3 calls the opening of *Persians* 'a near-quotation' of the opening of Phrynichus' play.

[22] Easterling (1997*b*) 167.

Phrynichus.[23] Since Phrynichus' play is lost, it is difficult to say with any precision what effect this intertextual allusion would have had on the audience. Phrynichus seems to have treated the subject of Salamis over the course of two plays (*Phoenician Women* and *Righteous Men* (*Dikaioi*)), and possibly a third.[24] Aeschylus' chorus of Persian elders may have been inspired by Phrynichus' *Righteous Men*, and the purpose of the allusion to Phrynichus could have been to signal, programmatically, that Aeschylus was conflating more than one earlier tragedy into a single drama.[25]

In the case of Sophocles' *Electra*, we can propose with more certainty the kind of impact its quotations from Aeschylus' *Agamemnon* might have had on the audience. The murder of Clytemnestra by Orestes in Sophocles' *Electra* contains two important intertextual allusions to Agamemnon's death-scene in the Aeschylean tragedy. At the climactic moment of her death Clytemnestra cries out the very same words as Agamemnon had in Aeschylus' earlier play, first ὤμοι πέπληγμαι 'Alas I am struck!' (*Ag.* 1343, S. *El.* 1415) and then ὤμοι μάλ' αὖθις 'Alas [I am struck] once more!' (*Ag.* 1345, S. *El.* 1416). Finglass comments that '[t]he nuance of the allusion . . . is far from clear', finding that the potential of presenting Clytemnestra's murder as a fitting punishment for her crime 'may be too optimistic an interpretation given the dark and troubling atmosphere of this lyric'.[26] Surely, however, stressing the cyclical and destructive nature of revenge (which casts Orestes as a second Clytemnestra) *is* actually 'troubling' rather than 'optimistic'. The purpose of the allusion seems clearly linked with this play's ethics of reciprocal vengeance. As Blundell has discussed, Orestes' deception is appropriate as a means of effecting revenge on the deceitful Clytemnestra.[27] Aegisthus will later be forced into the house so that he can be killed at the very place he murdered Agamemnon (S. *El.* 1493–6). The manner of Clytemnestra's death is similarly presented as appropriately reciprocal when understood in terms of intertextuality with *Agamemnon*. She dies in

[23] See Garvie (2009) 3–4.

[24] Sommerstein (2008) i. 3–4, who suggests, following Lloyd-Jones (1990) 233–4, that the line of Phrynichus evoked in the opening of *Persians* comes from *Righteous Men* rather than from *Phoenician Women* as stated in the hypothesis.

[25] Cf. Sommerstein (2008) i. 4: 'Aeschylus ingeniously reshapes these elements [sc. from Phrynichus] into a new and much tauter package.'

[26] Finglass (2007) *ad* 1415–16.

[27] Blundell (1989) 172–3.

the same manner as she had killed, and the effect achieved here is not dissimilar to the intertextual ethics of reciprocity developed in relation to *Agamemnon* in Euripides' *Electra* and *Iphigenia in Aulis* (discussed in Chapters 1 and 3). Although Sophocles' *Electra* generally eschews direct comparison with *Libation Bearers*, in contrast to the *Electra* of Euripides, it nevertheless appeals to the authority of the *Oresteia* through these quotations from Agamemnon's death scene.

Sophocles' fragmentary drama *Diners* (*Syndeipnoi*) contains a passage (fr. 565) quoting a remarkable line and a half from Aeschylus' (also fragmentary) *Bone-Gatherers* (*Ostologoi*) (fr. 180). The quotation is remarkable not only because a series of ten words in a row is imported verbatim into the new play,[28] but also because of its subject matter. Both fragments refer to someone who has hurled a chamber-pot at an antagonist hitting him on the head, causing the pot to smash and a foul odour to be released. Aeschylus' *Bone-Gatherers* was probably the last tragedy in a trilogy based on events from the *Odyssey*, dealing with Odysseus' triumph over the suitors and the collection of the bodies by their families.[29] Odysseus remembers the indignities he suffered at the suitors' hands, which, in Aeschylus, includes the following recollection of an assault by one of the suitors (fr. 180):

ὅδ' ἐστίν, ὅς ποτ' ἀμφ' ἐμοὶ βέλος
γελωτοποιὸν, τὴν κάκοσμον οὐράνην,
ἔρριψεν οὐδ' ἥμαρτε· περὶ δ' ἐμῷ κάρᾳ
πληγεῖσ' ἐναυάγησεν ὀστρακουμένη,
χωρὶς μυρηρῶν τευχέων πνέουσ' ἐμοί

'This is the man, who once hurled a missile at me,
to make me a laughing stock, the malodorous
chamber-pot, nor did he miss; it struck me on my head
and shattered like a shipwreck, dashed to pieces, sending forth
an odour over me far from that of perfume vessels'

Sophocles' *Diners*, which was probably the same play as the *Gathering of the Achaeans* (*Achaiōn Syllogos*),[30] included a quarrel between Agamemnon and Achilles, probably related to Achilles' late arrival at Tenedos (where the drama was set) and his exclusion from the

[28] The closest parallels are E. *Ba.* 193 = S. fr. 695 (cf. p. 192) and E. fr. 792 ≈ A. fr. 253 (cf. pp. 131–2).

[29] Sommerstein (2008) iii. 178.

[30] See Sommerstein (2006*c*) 88–90 with further references.

banquet hosted by Agamemnon.[31] Somehow an additional and more serious quarrel developed between Achilles and Odysseus, which rapidly escalated into violence, as 'the most memorable feature of the play'.[32] It is probable, in this context, that in Sophocles, as in Aeschylus, the chamber-pot's target is Odysseus, although here the attacker is not a suitor but Achilles (fr. 565):[33]

ἀλλ' ἀμφὶ θυμῷ τὴν κάκοσμον οὐρανὴν
ἔρριψεν οὐδ' ἥμαρτε· περὶ δ' ἐμῷ κάρᾳ
κατάγνυται τὸ τεῦχος, οὐ μύρου πνέον·
ἐδειματούμην δ' οὐ φίλης ὀσμῆς ὕπο

'but in his anger he hurled the malodorous
chamber-pot, nor did he miss; the vessel
broke on my head, nor did it send forth an odour of perfume;
and I was terrified by the inimical smell'

This extended allusion to Aeschylus' *Bone-Gatherers* is arresting in its similarity to the original, but there are some significant differences. Achilles does not intend to make Odysseus a laughing stock, as does the suitor in Aeschylus. Rather he attacks out of characteristic rage (*ἀμφὶ θυμῷ*) and Odysseus is terrified (*ἐδειματούμην*). From our knowledge of the *Odyssey*, we cannot doubt that Odysseus will triumph over the vile suitors, regardless of the indignities he suffers at their hands since, even in their numbers, they are no match for his intellect and physical prowess. An attack by Achilles, however, is a different matter altogether, since Odysseus could hardly hope to come off the better in a physical altercation with the greatest Greek warrior. Michelakis has argued that the aggressive behaviour of Achilles portrayed in Sophocles' *Diners* (and in Euripides' *Telephus*) can be linked to broader fifth-century concerns about the dangers of uncontrolled anger.[34] The allusion, then, might well be designed to make an audience wonder about (and fear) the harm Achilles might inflict on Odysseus if their quarrel remains unresolved. Being aware that Achilles has the advantage of brute force, it is possible that Odysseus (in a characteristic fashion) engineered and set in motion a plot to secure Achilles' downfall in the latter part of the play. Certainly some disastrous course of

[31] Sommerstein (2006*c*) 93–5.
[32] Sommerstein (2006*c*) 91.
[33] Sommerstein (2006*c*) 124–6.
[34] Michelakis (2002) 178–84.

events provokes the appearance of Achilles' mother Thetis to resolve the action at the end of the tragedy.[35]

The subject matter of the chamber-pot fragment has led some to argue that *Diners* is a satyr-drama, with the attack deemed ill-suited to the serious nature of the tragic genre.[36] On the same assumption, however, Aeschylus' *Bone-Gatherers* would also have to be a satyr-drama, which is unlikely,[37] and it seems reasonable to conclude that *Diners* was indeed a tragedy.[38] In fact, it is not uncommon for elements of what is normally considered comic language to appear in fifth-century tragedy. Seidensticker's landmark study of comic elements in Greek tragedy focuses primarily on Euripides,[39] but offensive smells feature in some undeniably tragic Sophoclean dramas. The Guard in *Antigone* reports sitting upwind from the stench of Polynices' putrefying corpse (*Ant.* 411–12), while Philoctetes' wound emits a foul odour in *Philoctetes* (890–1), and also in the lost *Philoctetes at Troy* (fr. 697). Sommerstein has discussed the use of comic language in Aeschylus' *Oresteia*, demonstrating that its exploitation is not necessarily for humorous purposes; rather it can be extremely unsettling. Comic language in the *Oresteia* reflects, in the linguistic sphere, the violation of decency associated with criminal activity.[40] The representation of an intolerable violation of decency seems similarly to be the purpose of the chamber-pot incident in the two tragedies we have been discussing.[41]

If *Bone-Gatherers* and *Diners*, were tragedies rather than satyr-dramas, the fact remains that the tragedians did also write many satyr-dramas. From what we know about the nature of the satyric genre, it was often overtly metatheatrical. We discussed Euripides'

[35] Sommerstein (2006*c*) 97–8.

[36] e.g. Sutton (1974*b*) 138–40, Patulan (1996), López Eire (2003) 399–400.

[37] Gantz (1980) 152–3, Grossardt (2003), Sommerstein (2003) 369–70.

[38] As do Sommerstein (2003), and Niall Slater in his (currently) unpublished paper 'Leaders Who Lunch: Tragedy and Corporeality in Sophocles' *Syndeipnoi*' delivered at the Classical Association of the Mid-West and South Conference in Richmond, Virginia, Oct. 2010. Krumeich, Pechstein, and Seidensticker (1999) 396–8 are not prepared to claim that *Diners* is definitely a satyr-drama and leave the question of its genre open-ended.

[39] Seidensticker (1982), who discusses relevant passages from Aeschylus and Sophocles but tends to treat them as examples of 'realism'.

[40] Sommerstein (2002).

[41] Sommerstein (2006*c*) 125 notes that in Demosthenes (54.4) is it considered outrageous for drunken men to empty chamber-pots over slaves, the implication being that committing such an offence against someone of equal status would be an even more scandalous insult.

Cyclops in the last chapter, particularly its intertextual relationship with *Odyssey* 9 and its metatheatrical references to the alleged absence of Dionysiac elements, including dancing. There is evidence that other satyr-dramas alluded to an earlier and specific literary work. Aristias, for example, also wrote a *Cyclops* and Aeschylus wrote a *Proteus* and a *Circe*, inspired by *Odyssey* 9, 4, and 5, respectively. Sophocles' *Trackers* (*Ichneutae*) reworks the *Homeric Hymn to Hermes* and Pat Easterling has shown that Ion's *Omphale* forms part of a complex intertextual network of sources concerning Heracles.[42] This does not mean, of course, that satyr-drama was restricted to intertextual dialogue with earlier versions of the same mythological episode. A fragment from Sophocles' *The Infant Heracles* (*Herakleiskos*) contains the statement 'for the doer is bound to suffer somewhat' (fr. 223b τὸν δρῶντα γάρ τι καὶ παθεῖν ὀφείλεται),[43] clearly an allusion to the system of justice operating in Aeschylus' *Oresteia* where 'the doer must suffer' (*Ag.* 1564 παθεῖν τὸν ἔρξαντα, cf. *Ag.* 1658, *LB* 313 δράσαντα παθεῖν),[44] with the qualification of 'somewhat' used for comic effect. Similarly metatheatrical reference to choral dancing and instrumental music is found in several fragmentary satyr-dramas. Starting with the well-known fragment of Pratinus' *Wrestlers* (*Palaistai* fr. 3) where a chorus of satyrs complain of the increasing role of the *aulos* in choral performance,[45] Maarit Kaimio and her team have shown that this kind of metatheatricality is very much at home in satyr-drama.[46]

Riddles and signs of various kinds feature repeatedly in satyr-drama, where the audience is encouraged to collude in interpretation. Sophocles' *Amphiaraus* featured a man dancing letters of the alphabet (fr. 121), which must have been decoded (or 'read') either directly by the audience, or by an intermediate character. Achaeus' *Omphale* contained a character spelling out the name of Dionysus from a cup (fr. 33),[47] and his *Iris* refers to an 'inscribed Spartan *scytale*' (fr. 19 τὸν

[42] Easterling (2007) 289–92.

[43] The translation quoted is that of Lloyd-Jones (2003) 97.

[44] See further Garvie (1986) *ad* 309–14 on the *Libation Bearers* passage.

[45] Seaford (1984) 15 suggests that the reference was to new developments in dithyrambic rhythms and polyphony.

[46] Kaimio et al. (2001) esp. 35–53, and see also Voelke (2001) 91–129 on the prevalence of music as a theme in satyr-drama. On choral dancing in satyr-drama see Voelke (2001) 131–82, Seidensticker (2003) 110–17 and (2010).

[47] Discussed by Slater (2002*b*) 125 n. 22.

Σπαρτιάτην γραπτὸν κύρβιν).[48] The *scytale* was a kind of folded writing tablet used by the Spartans to communicate during warfare.[49] These could contain names, as reported in Xenophon (*Hell.* 3.3.8–9),[50] and the tablet referred to in *Iris* may have been exploited to read out one or more names in a manner similar to Achaeus' *Omphale* fragment. Perhaps reading and/or writing also featured in Achaeus' *Linos*, named after the figure who brought the Phoenician alphabet to Greece. In a different interpretative scenario, the ignorant satyrs of Sophocles' *Trackers* slowly decipher and identify the sounds coming from inside Cyllene's cave through a series of questions and answers (fr. 314.299–331). The sequence is bound to amuse an audience whose knowledge that Hermes invented the lyre, from a tortoise shell and stretched oxhide,[51] means they will have solved the riddle before the satyrs. Indeed, the audience also seems to be invited into the search for the lost cattle of Apollo in this play when Silenus asks whether anyone has seen or heard of the cattle (fr. 314.83, 91), then asks everyone to join the search (fr. 314.93–8), with the discovery of the tracks repeatedly and excitedly pointed out by the chorus, in case anyone has missed them (fr. 314.101–2, 105–10, 115, 118–19). A fragment of Aeschylus' *Net-Haulers* (*Dictyoulkoi*) is similarly suggestive of audience inclusion where Dictys and the Fisherman are looking out for some sign in the sea (fr. 46a.1–6). Dictys catches something and tries to deduce what it could be but becomes exasperated and calls out for help to all the farmers, vine-diggers, shepherds, or charcoal burners (fr. 46a.7–20), and later to all the rustics (fr. 46c). The haul will turn out to be a chest containing Danae and Perseus. Doubtless the audience will (once again) have figured this out before the satyrs do. Aeschylus' *Sphinx* also featured the satyrs trying (and this time failing) to solve a riddle, the famous riddle of the Sphinx, with which the audience will have been very familiar.[52]

In addition to satyr-drama's tendency to include its audience in solving its riddles, the genre regularly draws metatheatrical attention

[48] See *LSJ s.v. κύρβεις* III for this metaphorical reference to the *scytale* and Krumeich, Pechstein, and Seidensticker (1999) 525 n. 4.

[49] Millender (2001) 143 shows that 'literacy played a central role in Sparta's conduct of both diplomacy and warfare'. The notion that the *scytale* was a cryptograph is rejected by Kelly (1985).

[50] See further Millender (2001) 148.

[51] As in the *Homeric Hymn to Hermes* 24–54.

[52] On the plot of *Sphinx*, see Sommerstein (2008) iii. 238–41.

to its masks, costumes, and props. In the *Trackers*, Silenus describes the chorus as 'unholy bodies moulded from wax' (fr. 314.146: μάλθης ἄναγνα σώματ' ἐκμεμαγμένα), 'just bodies and a tongue and phalluses to look at' (fr. 314.150–1: [σώ]ματ' εἰ[σι]δ[ε]ῖν μόνον, | καὶ γλῶσσα καὶ φαλῆτες), thus drawing attention to the artificial nature of their costumes. Indeed satyr-drama often referred to the phalluses and the bald heads of its choruses (the latter part of the full head mask), as Kaimio and her team have shown.[53] The chorus of Aeschylus' *Theōroi* famously affix likenesses of themselves to the temple of Poseidon, most probably masks (fr. 78a).[54] The satyrs claim that the images are so lifelike that their own mothers would be horrified on seeing them (fr. 78a.13–17). Mary Stieber argued that the images were more likely to be portraits than masks, and suggested the distress of the mothers is imagined because the images were unexpectedly realistic,[55] but this does not explain why the mothers would be horrified rather than amazed. Maternal horror would be more easily explained if the likenesses affixed to the temple were masks, which could be suggestive of decapitated heads, as in tragedy.[56] Pindar refers to a temple of Poseidon that was roofed with the skulls of strangers by Antaeus (*Isthmian* 4.58–60), so that this might be a satyric twist on a recognizable motif. If the likenesses were indeed masks, this means that the satyrs would have entered with two masks each, wearing one and holding the other. The imagery of the Pronomos vase depicts actors holding their masks in one hand when they were out of character. Oliver Taplin uses this and other evidence from vase painting to argue that, in the case of satyr-drama particularly, it was probable that actors took off their masks at the end of performances for the

[53] Cf. Aeschylus' *Net-Haulers* (fr. 47a.787–8, 794–5, bald head and erect phallus) and *Theōroi* (fr. 78a.29, phalluses), Sophocles' *Trackers* (fr. 314.368, bald head or erect phallus), all discussed by Kaimio et al. (2001) 53–4.

[54] Cf. Zeitlin (1994) 138–9, Kaimio et al. (2001) 56–8, Hall (2006) 109, Sommerstein (2008) iii. 83. The play is entitled *Theōroi or Isthmiastae* 'The Sacred Delegation or At the Isthmian Games'. A *theōros* was an envoy on official religious business, but it could also mean 'spectator' and Kaimio et al. (2001) 60–2 suggest a metatheatrical dimension to this term in satyr-drama, comparing a passage from Achaeus' *Athla* (fr. 3).

[55] Stieber (1994).

[56] It is likely that one or more masks were used to represent decapitated heads and affixed to the *skēnē* building in Euripides' *Iphigenia among the Taurians* (see Torrance (2009*b*) 25, with further references) and in Sophocles' *Oenomaeus* (fr. 473a, with Sommerstein and Talboy (2011) *ad loc.*). Pentheus' mask was probably used in Euripides' *Bacchae* to represent his decapitated head (see Foley (1985) 251–2 and Steiner (2001) 177 n. 168).

equivalent of a curtain call.[57] The satyrs in *Theōroi* have just run away from Dionysus, who had been training them for a dancing performance (fr.78a.33, fr. 78c.37–8), so that they could be holding masks to represent the fact that they have just left a choral performance. At the same time, they are in character for the new choral performance and are therefore also wearing masks. The effect would be to suggest that the satyrs have run away from one dramatic production and entered into another, putting their previous characters to rest by affixing those masks onto the *skēnē*. Previously dancers, the satyrs now desire to be athletes (hence the dedication to Poseidon as patron of the Isthmian games), but humour would be derived from the fact that the satyrs retain the same generic appearance in every play, and indeed their identity defines the genre, so that their 'dancers' masks look exactly like the 'athletes' masks. In any case, the audience is put in the position of being able to judge the quality of these likenesses for themselves, guided by the amazement of the satyrs.

Evidence from other satyr-dramas suggests that there was a strong potential for metatheatrical references to the masks of characters throughout the genre. In Sophocles' *The Judgment* (*Krisis*), Aphrodite appeared looking at herself in a mirror (fr. 361), and the many-eyed Argus was a character in his *Inachus* (frr. 281, 281a, cf. fr. 269.56), affording the opportunity of an arresting double-faced mask, and/or a costume depicting eyes on the body.[58] In another possible Sophoclean satyr-drama, *The Demand for Helen's Return* (*Helenēs Apaitēsis*),[59] a partially corrupt fragment seems to refer to Helen drawing lines on her face as an expression of grief (fr. 177). Lloyd-Jones proposes the translation 'who tortures her cheek, till lately faded, with pencils that she digs in'.[60] Black cosmetic eyeliner is mentioned as defining the eye in a fragment of Ion of Chios' satyric *Omphale* (fr. 25). This may have been part of a cross-dressing scene involving Heracles,[61] in which case the feminine quality of the make-up will have been especially incongruous. The mask (or masks) of the title character in Euripides' *Lamia* may

[57] Taplin (2010) esp. 259–63.

[58] Argus appears on vase paintings with two bearded faces in profile (see *LIMC* IV.2 *s.v.* 'Hera', pl. 485 and V.2 *s.v.* 'Io', pl. 2) and also with eyes all over his body (*LIMC* IV.2 *s.v.* 'Hera', pl. 486 and V.2 *s.v.* 'Io', pl. 4, 7, 11, 13, and cf. Fig. 7).

[59] On the possibility that this play was a satyr-drama, see Sutton (1980) 38–9, Radt (1999) 177–8, and Krumeich, Pechstein, and Seidensticker (1999) 391–3.

[60] Lloyd-Jones (2003) 71.

[61] See Easterling (2007) 287–8.

also have been striking. Originally beautiful and seduced by Zeus, a jealous Hera destroyed her children, and Lamia's grief at this loss made her hideous.[62] In Euripides' *Cyclops* Polyphemus exchanges his one-eyed mask for a mask representing a bloodied and blind eye-socket after the attack by Odysseus and his men. Polyphemus' new appearance is marked by his distress at the blinding (*Cyc.* 663, 669) and by the chorus's statements that he looks ugly (*Cyc.* 670).

The crafting process of props is also important in satyr-drama. The likenesses of the satyrs in Aeschylus' *Theōroi* are compared to the imitative craft of the legendary artisan Daedalus (fr. 78a.7). In Euripides' *Eurystheus* (fr. 372), a character tells an old man not to fear the creations of Daedalus, because even though they seem to look and to move they are not real (*οὐκ ἔ̓στιν*).[63] This draws metatheatrical attention to the artificial nature of the prop(s) in question. *Eurystheus* dramatizes the story of Heracles' retrieval of the dog Cerberus from the Underworld, and Collard and Cropp have suggested that this fragment referring to the creations of Daedalus may point to 'a giant theatrical dog' representing Cerberus.[64] One or both of Euripides' *Autolycus* plays may well have involved Autolycus' theft of some animals (perhaps belonging to Sisyphus), and his substitution, in return, of inferior creatures. The substitution will have been undetected by the owner but obvious to the audience, such as would create great potential for metatheatrical reference to costume or props.[65] Euripides' *Epeius*, named after the builder of the Trojan Horse (*Odyssey* 8.493, 11.523), perhaps featured some on-stage construction or a mechanical Trojan Horse. Similarly, it is possible that Sophocles' *Pandora* or *The Hammerers* (*Sphyrokopoi*) represented satrys engaged in creating (or hammering) a model of Pandora which was later endowed with life. Alternatively the satyrs are hammering the ground to release her from the earth.[66] Whatever the case, fr. 482 makes it clear that some sort of crafting is going on as

[62] See Collard and Cropp (2008) vii. 557.

[63] Daedalus himself may have been a character in Sophocles' *Men of Camicus* (*Kamikoi*), another possible satyr-drama (see Radt (1999) 310–12 and Lloyd-Jones (2003) 178–81), and a play which may be identical to Sophocles' *Daedalus*, on which see Radt (1999) 171, Krumeich, Pechstein, and Seidensticker (1999) 389–90, Lloyd-Jones (2003) 64–5.

[64] Collard and Cropp (2008) vii. 404.

[65] On the plot of the *Autolycus* plays see Sutton (1980) 60, Mangidis (2003) esp. 201–2, 206–8, Collard and Cropp (2008) vii. 278–81.

[66] See Sutton (1980) 55, Krumeich, Pechstein, and Seidensticker (1999) 375–80, Lloyd-Jones (2003) 250–1, Hall (2006) 156–7.

someone calls out the instruction 'and first begin to knead (*orgazein*) the clay (*pēlon*) with your hands'.

The fantastical world of satyr-drama lends itself far more readily than tragedy to metafictionality. We discussed in the last chapter how Silenus in the prologue of Euripides' *Cyclops* provokes a recognition of the fictionality of his escapades when he wonders whether he had fought against the Giants or whether it had been a dream (*Cyc.* 5–8). This is comparable to the aside of Xanthias in *Frogs* (51) where he inserts the joke 'and then I woke up' after the comic Dionysus has boasted of improbable successes in a naval battle (50–1). Far more radical in its implication of fictionality is Aeschylus' *Lycurgus*, named in the scholia on Aristophanes' *Women at the Thesmophoria* (135) as the satyr-drama accompanying the tragic trilogy *Edonians, Bassarids*, and *Youths* (*Neaniskoi*). *Lycurgus* seems to have dealt with the persecution of Dionysus by Lycurgus, who took captive the female followers of Dionysus and the satyrs (cf. [Apollodorus] *Library* 3.5.1). If this was the case, then the plot of *Lycurgus* must have presented a variant of events in *Edonians*, where the bacchants were miraculously released from captivity to Lycurgus.[67] As such it would be the only example we know of where a satyr-drama presents a competing alternative to the plot of a tragedy within the same tetralogy.[68]

These various scraps of evidence from the fragments of satyr-drama further demonstrate that the tragedians were well aware of a wide variety of metapoetic techniques, which they exploited in different ways. Their audiences became involved in the riddle-solving processes depicted on stage and there is some overlap here between satyr-drama and tragedy. One might compare the chorus in Aeschylus' *Agamemnon* who are slow to grasp Cassandra's 'riddles' that must be deciphered (*Ag.* 1112–13, 1183), while the audience understands the situation far more quickly. Similarly in Sophocles' *Oedipus the King* the audience has solved the riddle of Oedipus' identity long before Oedipus (the riddle-solver, cf. 393, 1525) has. These situations in tragedy are emotionally charged rather than light-hearted, but the techniques of presenting riddles to be solved, or of pitting audience recognition against characters who are slow to recognize, are essentially the same across the genres. Spelling riddles occur in tragedy also, exemplified by a fragment from Euripides' *Theseus* (fr. 382) later

[67] Cf. West (1990) 47–8.
[68] See Sommerstein (2008) iii. 126–7 and cf. 60–1.

imitated by Agathon (fr. 4) and Theodectas (fr. 6), discussed in Chapter 3.

Our brief survey of metapoetry in tragedy and satyr-drama should suffice to demonstrate that the tragedians regularly exploited metapoetic techniques such as intertextuality, audience address, and other metatheatrical devices. Tragedy was naturally less overt in its application of these techniques than satyr-drama, nor did tragedy exploit metapoetry for the kinds of comic effects achieved in satyr-drama. Nevertheless similar techniques were used in both genres. Euripides, then, was not alone in exploiting metapoetic techniques in his dramas. Moreover, the examples discussed show that the notion of metapoetry, in itself, is not enough to explain Euripides' distinctive tone. It is rather the sheer pervasiveness and multiplicity of metapoetic strategies employed by Euripides which, I suggest, account for our sense that Euripides is innovative and avant-garde. Euripides has often been singled out for the 'comic' tone in his tragedies and the 'parodic' nature of his allusions to earlier tragedies. The casting of some Euripidean dramas as 'comic' persists in some quarters,[69] but important studies by Justina Gregory, Donald Mastronarde, and Matthew Wright have challenged the appropriateness of referring to Euripidean drama as 'comic', 'tragicomic', or 'melodramatic'.[70] It is in the context of the complexities of his metapoetic strategies, rather than in some elusive 'comic tone', that Euripides can be reasonably compared with Aristophanes and other poets of old comedy.

EURIPIDES AND COMEDY

It is extraordinarily difficult to say with any certainty which scenes from Greek tragedy, if any, were meant to be 'funny' in the sense of eliciting laughter from the audience. Dramatic humour is very much dependent on delivery and timing in performance, as well as on the context and content of the situation. Even in the comedies of Aristophanes, there are many passages where context and structure make it certain that a joke is being made, but the nature of the humour

[69] Walton (2010) contains a section entitled 'The Comic Touch' (62–78) which discusses *Cyclops* and six Euripidean tragedies.

[70] Gregory (2000), Mastronarde (2000) and (2010) 44–62, Wright (2005).

remains obscure.[71] Nor does reference to laughter within the text of a drama provide a key to understanding audience response. Stephen Halliwell's discussion of passages from Euripides' *Cyclops*, *Alcestis*, and *Bacchae*, three plays most often associated with a 'comic' tone (with good reason in the case of *Cyclops*, at least), demonstrates how difficult it is to determine 'the relationship between laughter inside the dramatic world and (possible) laughter on the part of the audience'.[72] The distinctive nature of fifth-century tragic and comic performances is important here, as was well emphasized by Oliver Taplin in his influential article comparing tragedy and comedy.[73] Visually, as well as linguistically, tragedy and comedy are very different from each other, the former being characterized by solemn language and costumes, the latter being full of obscenities, grotesque characters, and males with exposed phalluses.[74] Both comedy and tragedy can exploit sexual innuendo, but they do so in very different ways. Delivered by or in the presence of an ithyphallic comic (or satyric) chorus, sexual metaphor is meant to be funny, but used in tragedy it is associated with danger and destruction, as, for example, in Sophocles' *Trachiniae* or in Euripides' *Hippolytus* and *Phoenician Women*.[75] Elizabeth Craik, who has persuasively exposed the patterns of sexual innuendo in *Trojan Women*, compares the situation in the later *Lysistrata* positing 'an interaction between tragedy and comedy' but also stresses that the dramas function 'on different planes'.[76] Similarly, as argued above, the notion of a chamber-pot being hurled

[71] Robson (2006) 4–5. Goldhill (2006) 96 similarly remarks that even within Aristophanic comedy, audience laughter is impossible to pinpoint accurately.

[72] Halliwell (2008) 127–39, quotation from 127. Taplin (1996) 190–1 briefly surveys some examples of laughter in tragedy concluding that the audience is not encouraged to share in the laughter, and cf. Gredley (1996) 206–8. Goldhill (2006) 91 notes that an audience will be uncomfortable if they laugh along with Pentheus (thus putting themselves in his precarious position) in the *Bacchae*.

[73] Taplin (1986).

[74] On depictions of actors from tragedy and satyr-drama on the Pronomos vase, see the collection of essays in Taplin and Wyles (2010), and see further Wyles (2011) on tragic costume, Taplin (1993) on images relating to comedy, and Trendall and Webster (1971) on illustrations of satyr-drama (29–40), tragedy (41–116), and comedy (117–44). Taplin (1996) 189–90 notes that tragic masks were characterized by solemnity, and comic masks by ugliness.

[75] See C. Segal (1995) 38, 45 and Winnington-Ingram (1980) 81 n. 28 on *Trach.*, Swift (2009) on *Pho.*, and Knox (1979) 208, 229 n. 8 on *Hipp.*

[76] Craik (1990) 11–12.

at Odysseus is an outrage when reported in a tragedy, though the same scenario could easily be exploited for humour in a comedy.

A passage from Euripides' *Trojan Women* is often held up as an example of an indisputable joke in the midst of an otherwise relentlessly sombre drama. When Hecuba begs Menelaus not to take Helen back aboard his ship, he replies: 'Why not? Is she heavier than she was before?' (*Tro.* 1050: *τί δ'ἔστι; μεῖζον βρίθος ἢ πάροιθ' ἔχει;*).[77] Kevin Lee suggested that Menelaus is afraid that Hecuba 'is close to the truth' and 'decides to dismiss her request with a laugh'.[78] Biehl, similarly, suggests that this is an 'Ablenkungsmanöver' on the part of Menelaus.[79] This 'truth' proposed by Lee presupposes that Menelaus does not really intend to kill Helen, but, as Michael Lloyd has stressed, 'Menelaus reiterates his decision to kill Helen at every opportunity'.[80] It seems more reasonable to suppose that Menelaus *does* anticipate killing Helen, although we know from *Odyssey* 4 that he will not in the end. Moreover, our own society is obsessed with female weight gain as an 'unattractive' quality, so that for a modern audience the joke centres on the world's most beautiful woman having become less attractive than before. Such a concept of female beauty, however, is unattested in antiquity.[81] In fact, the opposite seems to have been the case. Athena in the *Odyssey* (18.190–6) makes Penelope taller and *thicker* (18.196: *πάσσονα*) than usual when she endows her with immortal beauty to make the Achaeans admire her. It is possible, at least, that Menelaus' question is not a random joke for deflection, but rather raises a serious concern. It would be in keeping with the play's pervasive sexual innuendo for Helen's 'weight' to refer to a potential pregnancy.[82] This kind of 'weight' might not be immediately obvious, so the question would make sense even after Helen's presence on stage for over one hundred and fifty lines. Of course she is not pregnant (and never has been during her long time at Troy, cf. *Od.* 4.12–14), but the question would have the effect of underlining

[77] Seidensticker (1982) 89–91 uses this line as the opening example in his section on comic elements in Euripides. Goldhill (2006) 92–5 gives an overview of scholarly attempts to explain, excuse, or defend this alleged joke.

[78] Lee (1997*b*) *ad* 1049–50.

[79] Biehl (1989) *ad* 1050.

[80] Lloyd (1992) 111.

[81] Gregory (2000) 71, Goldhill (2006) 93.

[82] I owe this suggestion to Matthew Wright, who was brought to the point by one of his students.

Helen's adultery. Moreover, Helen had just mentioned, in her previous speech, her new marriage to Deiphobus, enforced after Paris' death (*Tro.* 959–60),[83] which might have given Menelaus further cause to wonder. If the suggestion is that Helen could be pregnant, the line is fraught with implications more serious even than Helen's adultery itself.

Deciding what might or might not be funny in Greek tragedy is a veritable minefield with no straightforward answers. We are on firmer ground when it comes to identifying metapoetic strategies, although the erroneous assumption that metapoetry, in its various forms, is almost exclusively a feature of comedy or satyr-play in fifth-century Athenian drama has also played a large part in perpetuating the notion that tragedies (mostly Euripidean tragedies) which exploit metapoetic techniques are more 'comic' than 'tragic' in outlook. In Taplin's Nietzschean assessment, for example, the metatheatricality of *Bacchae* is 'the last brilliant breakdown' of the distinction between the genres of tragedy and comedy, 'part of the crisis of the last years of the fifth century'.[84] Indeed, one of Taplin's major criteria in distinguishing between the genres in his 1986 article is metatheatricality itself, which, he argued, is typical of old comedy and appears in tragedies of the late fifth-century 'crisis', but is otherwise alien to the world of tragedy. Taplin later regretted his 'rigid treatment of self-referentiality in tragedy as something that either is or isn't there, as opposed to a feature of widely various intensity and explicitness'.[85] This new assessment makes room for examples of metapoetry in tragedies dating from much earlier in the fifth century that cannot be explained away by arguments, however unlikely, suggesting interpolation (as in the case of Euripides' *Electra*) or satyric genre (as in the case of Sophocles' *Diners*). As we have just seen, our earliest extant tragedy, Aeschylus' *Persians* of 472 BC, contains an intertextual allusion in its opening line, and Euripides' *Philoctetes* of 431 BC quotes a line of Aeschylus' *Philoctetes* almost verbatim. Nevertheless, Taplin was right to stress that comedy is, in general, *explicitly* self-referential, where tragedy is not.[86] I have argued throughout this study that the metapoetic strategies employed by Euripides are 'meta' precisely in the sense that they function to create a secondary layer of meaning beyond the

[83] See p. 229 n. 161 on the broader thematic relevance of these lines.
[84] Taplin (1986) 166, cf. 170.
[85] Taplin (1996) 189. [86] Taplin (1986) 171.

requirements of the fiction. Self-reference and allusion is *implicit* in Euripidean tragedy, but it can be explicit in satyr-drama, and it is important to remember the significant overlap in the audiences of comedy, tragedy, and satyr-drama; audiences who were unquestionably conditioned to decode double entendre, metatheatricality, and allusion in comedy and satyr-drama. Even in comedy, a double entendre may be implicit rather than explicit, so that when the chorus of Aristophanes' *Peace* (816–18) issue an invitation that they should be joined in celebrating the festival, Hall observes that '[i]t is not possible to be sure here whether the chorus mean the festival within the play (celebrating the reinstatement of Peace), or the City Dionysia extraneous to the play . . . so that it is legitimate to assume they mean both'.[87] Similarly, Ian Ruffell has stressed that in Aristophanes' *Knights*, 'Demos is simultaneously the people of Athens *and* an old, slightly deaf, splenetic, and rickety householder of relatively low status and with a house on the Pnyx'.[88]

Taplin differentiates further between comedy and tragedy in the realm of topical allusion, which, in tragedy, must be 'cryptic'.[89] Once more, I agree with Taplin's assessment, but would add that 'cryptic', that is 'hidden' within the plot, and 'obvious' are not mutually exclusive. For example, when Creon in Seamus Heaney's 2004 *The Burial at Thebes* (a version of Sophocles' *Antigone*) repeatedly refers to 'patriots' cast in opposition to 'traitors', it is within the powers of even the most inexperienced in literary allusion to detect the clear evocation of the then American president George W. Bush's rhetoric in promoting the 'Patriot Act', without becoming disconnected from the tragic plot.[90] If topical allusion is overt in comedy but cryptic in tragedy, what about satyr-drama? Taplin makes the important point that Greek dramatists did not cross over between tragedy and comedy.[91] Nevertheless, the genre of satyr-drama, which is similar to old comedy in its sexual humour, irreverence, and metatheaticality,[92] was composed by the *tragic* playwrights. It seems clear that there was much cross-generic experimentation between comedy and satyr-drama, particularly in the plays of Cratinus,[93] but also in other

[87] Hall (2006) 337. [88] Ruffell (2002) 150. [89] Taplin (1986) 167.
[90] Cf. Heaney (2004) 76 on using the charged language of patriotism.
[91] Taplin (1986) 163.
[92] Cf. Hunter (2009) 56, who remarks that satyr-drama was 'a highly self-conscious and self-referential genre—in this (at least) closer to Old Comedy than to tragedy'.
[93] Bakola (2010) 81–117.

fifth-century comic poets. Aristophanes' *Peace*, for example, contains a sequence modelled on elements from satyr-drama.[94] Moreover, it seems clear that satyr-drama was itself influenced by old comedy, especially in its use of humour, topical allusions, and paratragedy.[95] So tragic dramatists were perfectly capable of exploiting the meta-poetic techniques of comedy in their satyr-dramas, and it makes sense that they did so in their tragedies too, albeit in a less explicit guise more suited to the tragic genre.

The 'obvious' nature of allusions, is, of course, subjective, and what is obvious to some may not be so to others, but we must not forget that people tend to go to the theatre in groups and to discuss what they have seen after (sometimes even during) the performance. In this way the allusions and ironies detected by some may be exchanged with others, thus multiplying the number of people who become aware of a playwright's techniques. The opening of Aristophanes' *Peace* suggests that ancient theatre audiences did precisely this. It features two slaves discussing a mysterious giant beetle which eats enormous quantities of dung cakes. The situation is not entirely clear. The Greek word for beetle, *kantharos*, also happened to be the name of the comic poet who probably won first prize at the previous year's City Dionysia (in 422), so that Sommerstein suggests the audience might wonder whether Kantharos the poet is being lampooned.[96] The slaves certainly anticipate this *kind* of potential audience deduction. 'Well, by now some young man in the audience, who fancies himself as clever, may be saying "What's all this about? What has the beetle got to do with?"', says the first slave, to which the second responds, 'Yes, and then an Ionian fellow sitting beside him says to him: "My opinion is he's using it to allude to Cleon—saying that he's eating muck in Hades"' (*Peace* 43–8).[97] A fragment of Cratinus (fr. 342) contains a similar reference to a clever spectator speculating on the identity of a character, demonstrating that the passage from *Peace* is

[94] Sommerstein (2005*a*) *ad* 296–8, Hall (2006) 340–1.

[95] Zagagi (1999), Storey (2005) 208–9, Bakola (2010) 113 n. 104. Hunter (2009) 71 draws attention to some parallels between *Cyclops* and Aristophanes' *Wasps* both of which feature characters unaccustomed to drinking wine (Polyphemus and Philocleon, respectively) and an 'introduction of wine' narrative

[96] Sommerstein (2005*a*) *ad* 1; cf. Kanavou (2011) 102. Olson (1998) 68 is non-committal on the issue.

[97] Translation by Sommerstein (2005*a*) 9.

not an isolated incident.[98] The audience may have been far less vocal during a performance of tragedy than during a comedy. Taplin argued that, in order to be effective, tragedy 'demands the total concentration of its audience, intellectual and emotional',[99] but Ruffell has offered a refinement to this argument, suggesting that tragedy can evoke a range of emotional responses from the audience rather than a single overriding and constant emotional intensity.[100] Certainly, tragedy was 'austere' and featured just a few stage props, which were loaded with meaning, while the comic stage was crowded and busy and stuffed full of props.[101] A corollary of the minimalism of tragic stagecraft is that the audience is more closely focused on the *words* spoken or sung by the actors. Given the audience familiarity with and competence at deciphering metapoetic strategies,[102] in addition to the atmosphere of concentration while watching a tragic drama, and the likelihood of post-performance discussion, it is only reasonable to suppose that audiences of tragedy could and did decode implicit metapoetic statements in varying degrees.

The tragedies of Euripides are particularly rich in metapoetic suggestions, not only in his later works (as is usually maintained) but throughout his career.[103] His earliest extant play, the *Alcestis* of 438 BC, seems to have responded in important ways to the *Alcestis* of Phrynichus and his *Philoctetes* of 431 engaged extensively with the *Philoctetes* of Aeschylus. His *Hippolytus* of 428 has resurfaced throughout this study for the ways in which it persistently draws attention to its status as a newly rewritten version of the earlier (apparently unpopular) *Hippolytus Veiled*, through key terms referring to writing, *mythos*, novelty, and secondary status. Rewriting a play was remarkably uncommon among the Greek dramatists, but the rewriting of *Hippolytus*

[98] The parallel is also noted by Olson (1998) *ad* 43–5, and see further O'Sullivan (2006) on the possible relationship between the two passages.

[99] Taplin (1986) 171.

[100] Ruffell (2007) 44.

[101] Taplin (1986) 172 gives the comic examples of the courtroom scene in *Wasps*, the bedroom scene in *Lysistrata*, or the numerous characters of *Birds*. Raeburn (2000) 149 with 166 n. 3 gives the example of Dicaeopolis begging 'Euripides' for costumes and props in *Acharnians* 407–72.

[102] See Revermann (2006*b*), esp. 102, on the theatrical competence of the 5th-cent. audience.

[103] *Pace* Taplin (1986).

is not entirely without parallel.[104] Aristophanes' *Clouds* famously survives in the version revised by the poet after the original was placed third and last in the City Dionysia of 423. Although the revisions were never completed, Sommerstein observes that copies of both the original and revised versions were soon in circulation among the literate public as evidenced by a reference in Eupolis' *Dyers* (fr. 78), a play likely to date to before 415.[105] If the new version of *Clouds* was never performed, this does not mean that it was never intended to be performed.[106] There are a few other examples where revision seems clear. *Muses* by the early Doric comic poet Epicharmus, whose plays were produced at Syracuse, is a reworking of his previous comedy *Hebe's Wedding*.[107] Eupolis produced two *Autolycus* plays, the second apparently a revision of the first, and it is interesting that at least one of these comedies featured a pair of characters, probably poets, arguing metaphorically (and metapoetically) over innovation versus reusing old plots (fr. 60).[108] Finally, it is possible that Euripides' second *Phrixus* tragedy is a revised version of his first *Phrixus*, since the hypotheses to both plays reveal that they had similar plots.[109]

Some plays, which seem to exist in more than one version, actually deal with completely separate events in each play. In other cases, alternative versions cited in antiquity seem to refer, in fact, to one and the same play. Euripides' two *Autolycus* satyr-dramas may well have been different in content, or may simply have been two performances of the same drama.[110] Aristophanes' second *Women at the Thesmophoria* deals with a different day of the Thesmophoria festival and has a different plot from the first and extant play.[111] His two *Dramas* comedies were more than likely different plays, given the distinguishing alternative titles *Dramas* or *Centaur* and *Dramas* or *Niobus*,[112] and most scholars agree

[104] *Pace* Burian (1997) 201, who states that '*Hippolytus* is the only known instance of a second dramatization of the same subject by the same poet'.

[105] Sommerstein (1998) 2.

[106] Revermann (2006*a*) 327.

[107] So we are told by Athenaeus (3.110b), cf. *PCG* I. 33, 56, Olson (2007) 8, 42.

[108] Storey (2003) 82–95.

[109] Collard and Cropp (2008) viii. 423.

[110] See Collard and Cropp (2008) vii. 278–81, with further references.

[111] Sommerstein (2001*a*) 11, Austin and Olson (2004) lxxxiv–lxxxix, Henderson (2007) 267. Butrica (2001) argued that the extant play is the second, but Austin and Olson (2004) lxxxiv–lxxxvii demonstrate that his arguments are not compelling.

[112] Henderson (2007) 239.

that the lost *Peace* was entirely different from the extant drama.[113] A testimonium preserved in Choeroboscus' commentary on Hephaestion's *Enchiridion* (9.235) states that Aristophanes produced two versions of *Aeolosicon* (both now lost) and two versions of *Wealth* (of which the second is extant). Still it is difficult to say whether the second versions were revisions of the first or essentially different plays. Jeffrey Henderson suggests, for example, that the two recorded *Aeolosicon* comedies may have referred to two editions of the same play, one of which was produced without the choral songs,[114] and Sommerstein argues that there were two separate *Wealth* comedies, but also two variant scripts of the extant *Wealth*.[115] In the case of Magnes' two lost *Dionysus* comedies, we have 'no hint of the plotline'.[116] Sophocles' two Athamas plays may well have dealt with different episodes,[117] as was probably also the case with his three *Thyestes* tragedies.[118] His two *Phineus* plays may belong to different genres, the one being tragic, the other satyric.[119] Lloyd-Jones suggested in the cases of Sophocles' two *Women of Lemnos* and two *Tyro* plays that two versions were more probable than two separate episodes,[120] but the detailed discussion of the *Tyro* plays by Amy Clark suggests that these, at least, dramatized two separate episodes.[121] Notwithstanding the possibility that Sophocles might have revised one or more of his dramas, the absence of any compelling evidence in support of revisions means that we cannot pursue the issue further.

Overall, we know little about the circumstances of the Greek dramatists' revisions of their own dramas, but we *do* know that both *Hippolytus* and *Clouds* were rewritten by their authors because of the dramas' lack of success on first production. Zachary Biles has

[113] The extant *Peace* is very closely tied to its immediate historical context, which would no longer have been relevant when the second *Peace* was produced (*c.*410–405), see Sommerstein (2005*a*) xix, Hall (2006) 327, Henderson (2007) 253; Olson (1998) l–li suggests that the second *Peace* may have been a revision of the first, addressing 'some perceived shortcomings' (the play came second) but concludes that 'we can say almost nothing about' the second *Peace* except that it was later than the extant *Peace*.

[114] Henderson (2007) 111.

[115] Sommerstein (2001*b*) 28–33.

[116] Storey (2011) ii. 349.

[117] Sutton (1984) 23–6, Lloyd-Jones (2003) 10–11.

[118] Lloyd-Jones (2003) 106–7.

[119] Radt (1999) 485, 488, Lloyd-Jones (2003) 334–5.

[120] Lloyd-Jones (2003) 204, 313.

[121] Clark (2003).

also recently pressed this comparison in casting the revision of *Clouds* as a 'recontestation'.[122] This suggests a high degree of anxiety and self-reflection on the part of these playwrights. It is interesting that Aeschylus and Cratinus, the grand masters of fifth-century Athenian tragedy and comedy, respectively, do not seem to have revised any of their plays for a second performance or publication.[123] Such a parallel between the two dramatists may not be accidental. Emmanuela Bakola has argued that Cratinus (was) identified with Aeschylus (as 'traditional') in much the same way as Aristophanes (was) identified with Euripides (as 'newfangled'), and so possibly also the comic poet Ecphantides with the tragedian Choerilus, in a pattern of fifth-century comedians self-consciously pairing themselves and being paired with an appropriate tragic poet.[124] Both Aristophanes and Euripides seem to have been anxious about their place in the literary and dramatic canon. Aristophanes was keen 'to position himself as both successor and superior to Cratinus'.[125] Euripides' anxiety over his position is suggested not only by his revision of the unpopular first *Hippolytus*, but also by his ubiquitous engagement with Homer, the father of Greek poetry, Aeschylus, whose death in 456 BC had elevated his work to classic status, and Sophocles, who died a year after Euripides at the age of 90 and was, throughout Euripides' career, a more successful older contemporary. Aristophanes (and Eupolis) may well have been similarly anxious of being in the shadow of Cratinus, whose innovative self-parody in *Wine-flask* had secured him first place at the same City Dionysia where Aristophanes' *Clouds* came third and last.[126] Epicharmus' self-reflexive desire to revise at least one of his comedies,[127] on the other hand, is more likely to be

[122] Biles (2011) 169–76.

[123] Aeschylus' *Women of Aetna* (*Aitnaiai*) is recorded in some medieval manuscripts as existing in two versions, one genuine and one spurious (see Radt (2009) 126, Sommerstein (2008) iii. 7) so that the spurious version was presumably *not* written by Aeschylus.

[124] Bakola (2010) 24–9.

[125] Ruffell (2002) 143.

[126] On the 'radical innovations' of Cratinus' self-presentation in *Wine-flask*, see Ruffell (2002) 155–62 (quotation from 155), and Bakola (2010) 59–63; cf. Rosen (2000), who emphasizes (25) that Cratinus' construction of poetic identity in *Wine-flask* is distinctive.

[127] Other plays by Epicharmus have two alternative titles and Olson (2007) 8 tentatively suggests that these might 'be explained by partial rewriting and re-performance' although this cannot be proved.

related to his pioneering experimentation with drama. Olson reminds us that there is no firm evidence that Epicharmus' dramas were performed in Sicily as part of a contest,[128] so that anxiety over winning a contest was unlikely to have been an issue. Rather, the Sicilian poets are credited with introducing *mythoi* into comedy (Aristotle, *Poetics* 1449^{b}5–7), which suggests that Epicharmus was one of the pioneers in developing comedies from strings of jokes and personal invective into connected plots.[129]

In addition to occasionally revising plays which had not succeeded as hoped, Euripides (implicitly) and Aristophanes (explicitly) exploit some of the same metapoetic techniques pervasively in their plays. Scholars have observed that Aristophanes often uses the word *kainos* to draw attention to the originality of his comedy.[130] In the parabases of *Wasps* and *Clouds*, Aristophanes explicitly claims (in reference to the first, unsuccessful *Clouds*) that his work is *kainos* 'novel', and that the audience has been too stupid to grasp its novelty (*Wasps* 1044–5, *Clouds* 545–9). Michael Silk comments that 'the phraseology Aristophanes uses recalls his own characterizations of tragedy, not least . . . the tragedy of Euripides'.[131] In the case of *kainos* there are several examples. Euripides' *Helen* is referred to as *ἡ καινὴ Ἑλένη* 'the new Helen' in *Women at the Thesmophoria* (850). In the same drama the character of Euripides casts himself in the role of a tragic hero with a quotation from his *Aeolus* (fr. 28 = *Thesm.* 177–8) followed by an exclamation that he has been struck 'by a novel disaster' (*Thesm.* 179: *καινῇ ξυμφορᾷ*) and has come to Agathon as a suppliant. Later, Euripides' character is made to quote from his own *Medea*. Dressed as 'Perseus' and speaking in tragic style, he fails to convince the Scythian archer that the In-law is 'Andromeda' and that 'she' must be released. Acknowledging that his high-flown rhetoric has had no effect on the 'barbarian', 'Euripides' replies with an allusion to *Medea*: 'Offering novel cleverness to the ignorant is to waste one's time in vain' (*Thesm.* 1130–1: *σκαιοῖσι γάρ τοι καινὰ προσφέρων σοφά | μάτην ἀναλίσκοις ἄν*). In the *Medea* passage alluded to here, Medea is responding to Creon's charge that she is clever, lamenting the hostility that such a reputation can bring: 'By offering novel cleverness to the ignorant, you are deemed to be useless and not clever' (*Med.* 298–9: *σκαιοῖσι μὲν γὰρ καινὰ προσφέρων σοφὰ | δόξεις ἀχρεῖος κοὐ σοφὸς*

[128] Olson (2007) 7. [129] Cf. Olson (2007) 7–8.
[130] Silk (2000) 45–6, Wright (2012) § 3.1. [131] Silk (2000) 48.

πεφυκέναι). We saw, in the last chapter, that *Medea* contains the most instances of the term *kainos* in extant Euripidean drama, and I argued that the terms are exploited to underline the novel aspects of Euripides' treatment of the Medea story. In the Euripidean scene Medea's intellect is emphasized as novel, but read through Aristophanes, the statement becomes even more metapoetically loaded. Is it possible that Medea had addressed the audience in Euripides, suggesting that, if they are not ignorant, they will deem her (and the drama) to be clever? The question is ultimately unanswerable, but the tragic passage is so similar in implicit sentiment to the kind of explicit appeals to audience cleverness found in comedy, that the parallel is at least intriguing.

A fragment of Telecleides makes fun of Euripidean 'novelty', suggesting that a καινὸν δρᾶμα 'novel drama' is being put together for him thanks to Mnesilochus (his relative) and Socrates (fr. 41). Since Telecleides was among the generation of comic poets immediately preceding Aristophanes, the fragment demonstrates that Euripides was associated with novelty earlier in his career than the evidence of the extant Aristophanic parodies suggests. If, as I have argued, Euripides himself used the term *kainos* self-consciously as a trigger for audience recognition of his innovations, Silk's assessment of Aristophanes can be developed. The phraseology of *kainos* not only associates Aristophanes' self-presentation with his presentation of Euripides, but it is also *based on* one of Euripides' own metapoetic strategies. As with other Aristophanic parodies of Euripidean dramatic technique, such as costuming his characters in rags (*Ach.* 410–79, *Peace* 146–8, *Frogs* 842), using expository prologues (*Frogs* 946–7), or dramatizing cases of sexual perversion (*Frogs* 850), the stereotype of Euripidean drama being *kainos* is a comic caricature demonstrably based on the actualities of his plays. This does not necessarily mean that the issue of novelty is straightforward. Aristophanes' own attitude to novelty is complicated. Many of the techniques cast as 'old-hat' in the *parabasis* of *Clouds* are actually used by Aristophanes in that very play.[132] Similarly, the opening of *Frogs* features complaints about the hackneyed jokes of others all while exploiting those selfsame gags.[133] Novelty seems to have been a desirable quality for a successful dramatic production,[134] and yet within poetic claims to novelty there

[132] See e.g. Hubbard (1991) 88–112, Wright (2012) § 3.2.
[133] Ruffell (2002) 141, Wright (2012) § 3.6.
[134] Wright (2009) 155.

remains the kind of tension present in *Clouds* and *Frogs*. This brings us back to the issue of anxiety, and the challenges of composing novel dramas in the late fifth century. Matthew Wright, in his new book *The Comedian as Critic*, surveys the fragments and extant plays of old comedy, observing that comic poets, in general, 'are constantly talking about novelty while openly reusing material'.[135] In this context, we might readily compare the complex exploitation of the term *kainos* in Euripides' *Trojan Women*, repeatedly used to draw attention to 'old' mythological events, as we discussed in the last chapter.

Another trigger word, *mythos*, associated with Euripidean metapoetics in this study can be found in old comedy. Pherecrates, for example, uses the term *mythos* to describe his own dramas in *Small Fry* (*Krapataloi*) when the judges are warned to be fair if they want to avoid being the object of Pherecrates' abuse in his next play (fr. 102). Aristophanes uses the word *mythos* to denote fables and fictions (*Wasps* 566, 1179, *Lysistrata* 781, 805, *Wealth* 177).[136] In *Peace*, Trygaeus' daughter uses a paratragic expression of disbelief, which appears verbatim in Euripides' later *Iphigenia among the Taurians*: 'You have related an unbelievable *mythos*' (*Peace* 131 = *IT* 1293: ἄπιστον εἶπας μῦθον). In *Peace*, the expression is a response to Trygaeus' erroneous claim that a beetle was the only winged creature to have reached the gods' domain in the fables of Aesop (*Peace* 127–30). In fact an eagle had first flown to heaven in the fable, and the beetle had followed, and we are reminded of this by Trygaeus' subsequent reference to the beetle's enmity with the eagle (*Peace* 133–4).[137] The story, already a fantastical fiction in itself, thus seems to have been deliberately and problematically recomposed. In the Aesop fable, the beetle flies up to heaven as part of its ongoing revenge against the eagle for an earlier wrong, with the intention of finding the eagle's eggs and rolling them out of their nest, as Trygaeus has just reminded us (*Peace* 134). It is only logical, therefore, that the eagle had arrived in heaven before the beetle. We know that the beetle did get the better of the eagle,[138] but the fact remains that the beetle was *not* the only winged creature to have

[135] Wright (2012) 92.

[136] Harriott (1986) 91–118 has an interesting discussion of Aristophanes as 'myth-maker', in which she appeals to the Greek term *mythos* (91), though she does not include analysis of the term's appearance in the comedies.

[137] See Sommerstein (2005*a*) *ad* 133.

[138] See Sommerstein (2005*a*) *ad* 133.

reached heaven in Aesop, nor even the first. The *mythos* is thus doubly unbelievable, both in its original version and in its reconstruction.

It suits the comic medium to prioritize the beetle at the expense of the lofty figure of the eagle, but this short passage is also emblematic of the process of writing dramatic fiction based on mythological events. The original fiction is modified and repurposed for a new context and a new fiction. We cannot be sure of the source for this paratragic expression, and it may be that both Aristophanes in *Peace* and Euripides in the *IT* are evoking an earlier lost tragedy. Nevertheless, as we saw in Chapter 3, the expression in the *IT* is also mapped onto an engagement with the notion of fictionality. There the 'unbelievable story' refers to the report of Iphigenia's attempted escape with Orestes, Pylades, and the cult statue of Artemis. The chorus of Iphigenia's attendant women, who attempt to misdirect the messenger, are well aware that such an escape was precisely what Iphigenia had planned, in a scheme which was itself cast as a fiction, so that the chorus's expression reinforces the sense that Iphigenia is controlling the plot. It is not beyond the realm of possibility that Euripides might have been evoking the Aristophanic passage. A line from Euripides' *Cyclops* (222) has been identified by Richard Seaford as a parody of a line from Aristophanes' *Women at the Thesmophoria* (1105), which was itself a parody of Euripides' *Andromeda* (fr. 125).[139] Polyphemus' first words on seeing the Greeks are ἔα, τίν' ὄχλον τόνδ' ὁρῶ πρὸς αὐλίοις 'Hey! What crowd (*ochlon*) is this I see before my cave' (*Cyc.* 222). This comically reverses the situation of 'Perseus' ('Euripides' disguised as Perseus) whose first words on seeing 'Andromeda' (the In-law) are ἔα, τίν' ὄχθον τόνδ' ὁρῶ καὶ παρθένον 'Hey! What rock (*ochthon*) is this I see and which maiden' (*Thesm.* 1105). This, in turn, parodies *Andromeda* fr. 125.1–2 where Perseus sees Andromeda and exclaims ἔα, τίν' ὄχθον τόνδ' ὁρῶ περίρρυτον | ἀφρῷ θαλάσσης, παρθένου δ' εἰκὼ τίνα 'Hey! What rock (*ochthon*) is this I see lapped by the foam of the sea, and what maiden's likeness'. In *Andromeda*, and in the Aristophanic parody, the Greek hero arrives in a foreign landscape and wonders what he sees. Read intertextually, the line in *Cyclops* transforms the Greek hero Odysseus and his men into the

[139] Seaford (1984) 49. The sequence of allusions depends, of course, on Seaford's dating of *Cyclops* to 408. If *Cyclops* was performed with *Andromeda* in 412, as argued by Wright (2006*a*), the allusion will have been internal to the tetralogy, with the parody in Aristophanes alluding to both plays.

object of curiosity. It is no longer the figure within the barbarian landscape that is held up as strange, but the Greeks themselves. This works well within the drama's exploration of a newly sophisticated and urbane Cyclops, who nevertheless retains savage qualities, and with the drama's metapoetic suggestion that the visit to Sicily is reckless, as discussed in the last chapter. Given this parallel and Euripides' frequent use of the term *mythos*, it is possible that the paratragic ἄπιστον εἶπας μῦθον 'you have related an unbelievable story' in Aristophanes' *Peace* (131) was an allusion to a lost Euripidean play, and that the quotation in the *IT* (1293) was doubly intertextual in a similar manner, although, in the absence of the original, we cannot say exactly what the implications are.

The *IT* is one of the Euripidean tragedies that featured prominently in our discussion of the motif of writing and its association with self-conscious *mythopoiēsis* and authorial control (Ch. 3). Extant plays and fragments from old comedy contain explicit references to drama as text. Cratinus' *Wine-flask* (*Pytine*) contains a character exhorting another to 'write' Cleisthenes (fr. 208: γράφ') and Hyperbolus (fr. 209: γράψον) into scenes where they can be ridiculed. The comedy may even have featured a scene in which 'Cratinus', the lead character in the play, was writing a new drama.[140] *Frogs* (52–4) famously presents Dionysus recalling how he had read Euripides' *Andromeda* while on a naval expedition. Earlier Aristophanic comedy also contains metatheatrical representations of drama as text. Niall Slater shows how the opening scenes in *Knights* (424 BC) move from an improvisational style of comedy into a scripted drama, where the 'script' is represented by the text of the oracle read aloud by Nicias.[141] Writing is associated with fixity in comedy, as in tragedy, so that later in the play, Paphlagon is trapped by his adherence to the written scrolls, while the Sausage-seller wins his victory by improvising his arguments according to the situation.[142] In *Birds* (959–91), we are presented with a comic contest between two different kinds of text, the oracle-seller's written collection of oracles and the book produced by Peisetaerus. Slater suggests that the audience might have understood

[140] Slater (1996) 108–9, Ruffell (2002) 161.
[141] Slater (2002*a*) 69–71.
[142] Slater (2002*a*) 81, who posits (225–6) a similar reading of the argument between the First Old Woman and the Girl in *Women at the Ecclesia* (1015–42).

Peisetaerus' book as his script,[143] and he belongs to a group of scholars who argue that the evidence of comedy supports the notion of a reading public for ancient plays.[144]

METAPOETRY IN EURIPIDES AND IN COMEDY

Old comedy explicitly employs many of the metapoetic strategies that are implicitly deployed throughout Euripides' dramatic oeuvre. The general contrast between the (respectively) more open and the cryptic methods of deployment does much to ensure humour in comedy and satyr-drama but not in tragedy, and not all metapoetic techniques are common across the genres. Old comedy, for example, does not exploit the term *metabolē*, and understandably so, since its plots do not turn on reversal of fortunes in the way tragic plots do. Rather, as Ian Ruffell has shown, the term *epinoia* (meaning something like 'concept') is used metapoetically by Aristophanes to draw attention to a central plot feature,[145] in a manner unparalleled in tragedy. Euripides shares with his fellow tragedians a deep engagement with earlier epic and dramatic poetry, but the pervasiveness of Euripides' engagement with earlier sources and his signposting of this relationship mean that his metapoetic techniques can be compared with those of the old comedians. I have not rehashed here the extensive evidence for comedy's intertextual reconfiguring of earlier poetry, which many others have already documented and discussed.[146] Rather I have argued that Euripidean drama shows signs of an anxiety of posteriority similar to that of Aristophanes, that Euripides shares with old comedy the metapoetic trigger words *kainos* and *mythos*, and that the relationship between text and plot in his dramas is also something explored in old comedy. The well-known fragment of Cratinus (fr. 342) which coins the term *εὐριπιδαριστοφανίζων* 'euripidaristophanizer' suggests a symbiosis between Euripides and Aristophanes, and implies that the two poets share some attitude or

[143] Slater (2002*a*) 141. There are other references to written texts in *Birds* (1024–5, 1037), on which see further Slater (1996) 100–3 and Slater (2002*a*) 142.

[144] Lowe (1993), Slater (1996), Nieddu (2004), Wright (2012) 141–71.

[145] Ruffell (2002) 148–50.

[146] See e.g. Pucci (1961), Rau (1967), Bremer (1993) 149–60, Silk (1993), Ruffell (2002), Olson (2007) 151–86, Bakola (2010) 118–79, Biles (2011) 134–66.

outlook.[147] Of course, the term points to Aristophanes' frequent use of Euripidean material and the fact that 'Euripides' is a character in his comedies. Still, it is possible that the close relationship between the two, as perceived by Cratinus, also relates to their comparable metapoetic techniques. Euripides, for his part, may well have been influenced by Aristophanes in some respects. Elizabeth Scharffenberger has argued that Jocasta in *Phoenician Women* is modelled in several ways on Aristophanes' Lysistrata.[148] This does not make *Phoenician Women* comic, but rather heightens the tragic tension, as Scharffenberger shows.[149] Metapoetry in Euripidean drama may share important features with Aristophanic technique, but this does not make Euripidean tragedy any less serious or more 'comic'. Michael Silk has observed in relation to Aristophanes, that Euripidean influence does not mean that Aristophanes 'devotes his career to a quest for some kind of comitragedy'.[150] The reverse is also true.

[147] Pucci (2007) finds parallels between Euripides and Aristophanes in the ways their plays eschew straightforward didacticism by presenting two contrasting arguments on central issues.
[148] Scharffenberger (1995).
[149] Scharffenberger (1995) 314.
[150] Silk (2000) 416.

Conclusion

στρεψίμαλλος τὴν τέχνην Εὐριπίδης
Euripides, tangled-fleeced in his craft
Aristophanes (fr. 682)

This fragment from an unidentified play by Aristophanes is quoted in a scholium on *Frogs* 775, where Euripides is said to have won over the masses in Hades when they heard his 'contradictory arguments, his windings, and twistings' (*τῶν ἀντιλογιῶν καὶ λυγισμῶν καὶ στροφῶν*). Like all Aristophanic jokes about Euripides, these statements are comic exaggerations based on an identifiable stereotype associated with Euripidean drama. This study has sought to unravel the 'tangled fleece' and 'twistings' of Euripidean metapoetics in order to expose the distinctive strategies underpinning his oeuvre. Given that a fleece is raw material for woven cloth, and that weaving is a metaphor for poetic creation, the image of the tangled fleece is a remarkably appropriate metaphor for the intertextual nature of Euripidean drama that we have traced. Euripides fearlessly and repeatedly takes on the poetic giants Homer, Aeschylus, Sophocles, and even himself (in rewriting *Hippolytus*). He uses a variety of techniques, often in combination with each other, to signal his engagement with earlier poetry. These include rewriting particularly famous episodes, alluding to previous treatments through rare words, images, or phrases, and using trigger words to underline plot construction (such as *metabolē* and *agōn*), mythological novelty (such as *mythos* and *kainos*), and secondary status in relation to an earlier work (such as *deuteros* or *dissos*). Allusions to mythological novelty are combined in several plays with references to writing to suggest a new 'script'. Rewriting poetic models always forms an organic part of broader thematic

concerns in each play, whether social, theological, or political, so that two levels of audience awareness are encouraged but, at the same time, metapoetic strategies in the tragedies, at least, do not break the dramatic illusion.

Stinton had considered that self-conscious allusion in Greek tragedy would create an ambiguity that would confuse the audience, and that such ambiguity would have been 'the mark of an incompetent dramatist',[1] but this pessimistic view of the capabilities of the audience (or the dramatist) is entirely unfounded and, I would argue, incorrect, based on the findings of this study. Rather, I would stress, as does Ian Ruffell in a recent study of audience and emotion in the reception of Greek drama, the symbiosis of metacommunication and fictionality.[2] The response of an audience to a performance will naturally be varied. I have argued that at least a portion of Euripides' audience will have had access to written copies of poetic texts (pp. 10–11, 175–82), but also that literacy is not a prerequisite for understanding metapoetry. Many intertextual allusions are developed around unusual and memorable language or imagery (cf. esp. Chs. 1 and 2), novelties tend to be marked by recognizable trigger words (cf. esp. Chs. 3 and 4), and audience members were used to decoding metapoetic techniques and would have discussed dramatic performances with each other (see esp. Ch. 5). Moreover, I have stressed the importance of satyr-drama (Ch. 4, pp. 245–64 and Ch. 5, pp. 275–82) for demonstrating that all the tragic poets were capable of deploying sophisticated, and indeed overt, metapoetic strategies.

Metapoetry in tragedy is distinguished by being implicit rather than explicit, but is employed by Aeschylus and Sophocles as well as by Euripides. What distinguishes Euripides is not the exploitation of metapoetry in itself. Rather, his oeuvre is characterized by an overwhelming pervasiveness of metapoetic elements in combinations not present in the other tragedians. Furthermore, Euripidean dramas persistently position themselves self-consciously as rivals to an earlier and well-known poetic work, usually a tragedy by Aeschylus or Sophocles. At the same time, Euripides tends to allude to details from the epic cycle, which he repeats or continues, often transposing epic paradigms into new contexts. His satyr-drama *Cyclops* is unique in directly rewriting a Homeric episode, and develops the same kind of overt and

[1] Stinton (1986) 91. [2] Ruffell (2007) 41.

metaphorical metapoetic games that are often found in old comedy. The relationship between Euripides and old comedy was raised in the Introduction, where we noted that Euripidean drama has often been found to have a 'comic' tone. Notwithstanding the fact that all the Greek tragedians exploited language and scenarios that could be termed 'comic', as discussed in Chapter 5, I have argued that the elusive Euripidean tone is not so much 'comic' as 'metapoetic'. The metapoetic strategies used by Euripides are, in some cases, the same as those used by the old comedians, and it is possible that the comedians were directly influenced by Euripides. Certainly Aristophanes uses 'Euripides' as a character and satirizes his dramatic techniques repeatedly in his comedies, and we have observed, along the way, how many Aristophanic parodies of Euripides' poetic techniques are based on identifiable trends in Euripidean drama. Nevertheless, certain metapoetic strategies do not cross the boundaries of genre, and it is clear that Euripides used metapoetic techniques appropriate to the tragic genre in his tragedies (see Ch. 5).

If Euripidean drama is like a tangled fleece, then it is up to the members of the audience (or the reading public) to see if they can untangle the fleece. Euripidean metapoetry often uses language of signs and vision that invites interpretation. In contrast to Aeschylean *ekphrasis*, where judgments of value or meaning are expressed by the characters within the drama, *ekphrasis* in Euripides tends to be constructed in a way that invites audience response and analysis (see Ch. 2). The Athenians were very keen on riddles, and solving riddles was associated with cleverness. A fragment from an unidentified play by Sophocles (fr. 771) states that Apollo makes his prophecies to clever men (*sophois*) in the form of riddles (*ainiktēra*), but to fools (*skaiois*) he is a paltry instructor (*phaulon . . . didaskalon*). Moreover, foolishness (*to skaion*) is first and foremost characterized by a lack of poetic understanding (*amousian*), according to a Euripidean fragment (fr. 1033, also from an unidentified play). Such a statement implies what the *parabasis* of Aristophanes' *Clouds* states explicitly (535, cf. 575), namely that the Greek dramatists hoped their plays would be received by intelligent spectators. Aristophanes hoped the spectators would get his 'most intellectual comedy' (*Clouds* 520–3). Euripides implicitly challenges his audience to solve his poetic riddles.

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